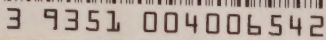


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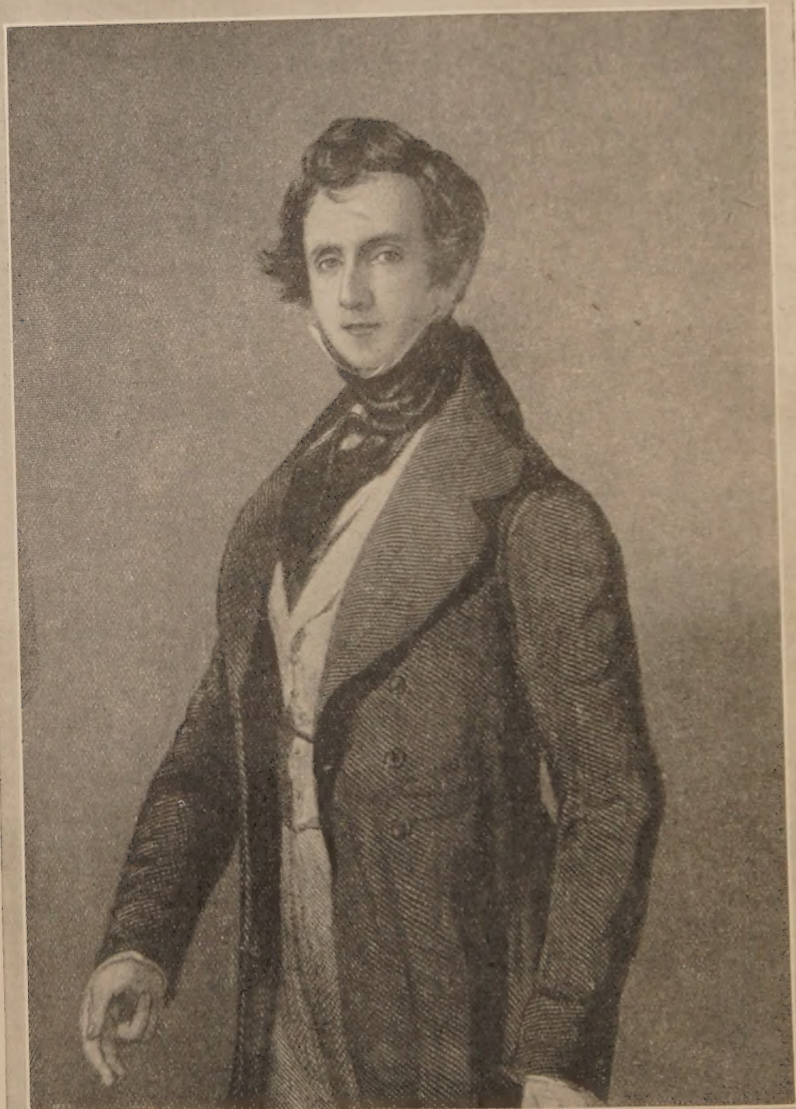


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THE SOLITARY HORSEMAN



G. P. R. JAMES,
at the age of forty-three.
From the portrait by F. Cruickshank, 1844.
Block by courtesy of Messrs. Hutchinson.

[Frontispiece.]

THE SOLITARY HORSEMAN

or

*The Life & Adventures
of G. P. R. JAMES*

by

S. M. ELLIS



At

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Kensington*

1927

*This Edition has been
strictly limited to
eight hundred copies*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Miss Blanche James, granddaughter of G. P. R. James, for much assistance in this book, particularly in giving me access to the manuscript autobiography of her father, the late Charles Leigh James, whose early recollections provide the principal records of G. P. R. James's last years in America and Venice.

I thank Messrs. Harper for courteous permission to quote from the portion of manuscript autobiography of G. P. R. James now in their possession ; and for their kind interest in my work, Mr. A. St. John Adcock, Mr. Richard Bentley, Mr. J. C. L. Clark, Dr. J. S. Crone, Mr. Edmund Downey, Mr. W. A. Frost, Mr. H. Festing Jones, Mr. Victor Plarr, and Mr. Michael Sadleir.

This book was commenced as far back as 1912. Various difficulties, including the War, caused it to be laid aside, uncompleted until recently. It sadly follows that, during the years which have since elapsed, several friends who assisted me at the outset have died. But I do not forget them. Mr. Adrian H. Joline, of New York, who first suggested that I should write James's biography, placed at my service many of the novelist's letters which are quoted in the following narrative ; he supplied other references also, for Mr. Joline was himself the author of a short Memoir of G. P. R. James, privately printed in America in 1906. Sir F. C. Burnand went through many volumes of contemporary satires in order to find for me pasquins such as are given on pages 260-261. And Sir George Birdwood, Mr. A. M. Broadley, Mr. Frederic Chapman (of The Bodley Head), Miss Agnes James, and Mr. Thomas Seccombe, were other friendly abettors who will never read these pages—to my lasting regret.

S. M. ELLIS.

March, 1927.

CHAPTER I

Ancestry. Dr. Robert James and Johnson

GEORGE PAYNE RAINSFORD JAMES, like the majority of notable English authors, was a son of the professional middle class. His immediate ancestors were medical men: but around earlier generations of the family clung picturesque, vague traditions quite appropriate to the lineage of a historical novelist. James, however, attached little importance to his pedigree, which in all probability had its origin in some remote kingly laxity, for, as he himself stated in his manuscript autobiography :

“Certain it is that the name of James once had a significant particle—‘Fitz’—before it, but one of my ancestors had the good sense to drop the affix of illegitimacy from the family surname, and to leave out the bend sinister from the Arms. Some old emblazoned Coats of Arms and a rescript of one of the Edwards to a Thomas FitzJames, which I still possess somewhere, with a great seal of dull yellow wax attached to it, are the only mementos of family honours which I myself have seen. My friend, the late Sir Harris Nicolas, the well-known

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Herald, once told me a long story about my progenitors and the lands and titles which I could recover—if I liked to try ; but such experiments are costly in England, and I had no money to seek the lands and no inclination to contend for the titles.

“ A great many other vague traditions in regard to our race were current amongst my relations when I was young ; but only two certain facts, which I know of, throw any honour upon it. These are that one of my direct ancestors fought at the glorious battle of Ivry, in command of the Horse Arquebusiers sent by Queen Elizabeth to the aid of Henri IV¹ ; and that another was shot by a party of William of Orange’s soldiers after the Battle of the Boyne, having remained attached to his rightful Sovereign, notwithstanding all examples of treason and every difference of faith. He was recognised in a cabin by the buffalo crest upon the arm of his servant’s coat, which he had put on, and murdered in cold blood. From his eldest son—then a child—my grandfather was, I believe, the next in descent.”

This grandfather, Dr. Robert James, of the novelist was a very notable man, the friend of Samuel Johnson, and the compounder of the renowned James’s Powders. Born in 1705, a son of Edward James of Shenstone, Staffordshire, his friendship with Johnson commenced in school-days at Lichfield. Though James was

¹ It is said that the James crest and motto—a buffalo charging, “En Avant”—had their origin in this ancestor, who advised that famous Ivry “Charge for the golden lilies,—upon them with the lance.”

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four years senior to Johnson, it is possible he was one of the boy slaves who used to carry, with stooping back, that most unpleasant young autocrat into school, or, barefooted on ice in winter, had to drag the ponderous Samuel "along by a garter fixed round him: no very easy operation as his size was remarkably large," according to the meticulous Boswell. Johnson and James continued their friendship in London, and it was here that Robert James produced his *A Medicinal Dictionary*, in three volumes, 1743.¹ After his friend's death, Johnson declared to Boswell: "My knowledge of physic I learnt from Dr. James, whom I helped in writing the proposals for his Dictionary, and also a little in the Dictionary itself." Boswell elaborated these words into the assertion that Johnson "furnished some of the articles," and "certainly wrote for it the Dedication to Dr. Mead." Against this must be put the following statement by G. P. R. James: "It is sufficient to say that the internal evidence does not bear out the assertion. . . . The little doctor was much too proud to ask assistance of anyone, and those who have read his writings are well aware that he was quite as capable of writing that preface² as Johnson himself. Moreover, one day, in looking over the *adversaria* of

¹ In the same year James published his *New Method of Preventing and Curing the Madness caused by the bite of a Mad Dog*.

² Presumably Johnson and Boswell and G. P. R. James, in using the words "proposals" and "preface," mean the same thing. The Preface to James's *A Medicinal Dictionary* occupies ninety folio pages.

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A Medicinal Dictionary I stumbled upon the whole preface written in Doctor Robert James's own hand. Johnson indeed was held in just reverence by my grandfather, long before the former had emerged from the obscurity which shadowed his early years ; and my father and his brothers used to say that from him alone would their parent ever bear contradiction. Some degree of tenderness might perhaps mingle in this placability towards his mighty friend in a man who was generally not tender, for they had known together adversity so great that in a note of Johnson's to his early companion, which I have read, he asks for the loan of a guinea in some urgent strait."¹

Robert James died in 1776, eight years before his friend. Boswell, in recording Johnson's reception of the news, says : " I thought that the death of an old schoolfellow, and one with whom he had lived a good deal in London, would have affected my fellow-traveller much : but he only said : ' Ah ! poor Jamy ! ' Afterwards, however, when we were in the chaise, he said, with more tenderness, ' Since I set out on this jaunt I have lost an old friend and a young one ; Dr. James and poor Harry ' (meaning Mr. Thrale's son)."

But Johnson, a few years later, paid tribute to Robert James's medical skill, for he wrote in his *Lives of the Poets*, apropos of Gilbert Walmsley : " At this man's table I enjoyed many cheerful and instructive hours, with companions such as are not often found—with one who has lengthened, and one who has gladdened, life ;

¹ MS. Autobiography of G. P. R. James.

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with Dr. James, whose skill in physic will be long remembered; and with David Garrick . . .” And on another occasion, Johnson observed of Dr. James: “No man brings more mind to his profession.”

Apparently Johnson had not a high opinion of his friend's pharmaceuticals, for he remarked, “I never thought well of Dr. James's compounded medicines; his ingredients appear to me sometimes inefficacious and trifling, and sometimes heterogeneous and destructive of each other . . . the basis of his medicine is the gum ammoniacum.”

Dr. James took out the patent of his Powders for use in cases of fever in 1746, and the chief ingredients of the remedy appear to have been antimony and hartshorn. The exclusive privilege of selling the Powders was assigned only to J. Newbury, at the sign of the Bible and Sun in St. Paul's Churchyard, “over against the North Door.” Two doses cost 2s. 6d., “with good allowance for those who buy them for charitable Uses or to sell again.” The public consumed the Powders without troubling about their composition, and even doctors were ignorant of the ingredients. In *Travels in Egypt in the year 1814*, by Captain Henry Light, R.A., the author relates that he used the remedy for the troops in Cyprus, and an eminent medical man who questioned him about the efficacy of James's Powders actually believed they were composed of “pulverised cranium of the human head.”

Dr. James's famous Fever Powders attained great notoriety at the time of Oliver Goldsmith's death, in 1774. On the day he took to his bed,

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his doctor, William Hawes, found Goldsmith, with his pulse at ninety, complaining of violent pain in the forepart of his head and his mind made up that he would be cured by James's Fever Powders. He had, says Forster, "derived such benefit from this fashionable medicine in previous attacks, that it seems to have left him with as obstinate a sense of its universal efficacy as Horace Walpole had, who swore he should take it were the house on fire." Hawes urged his patient not to take the Powder, but after the doctor had departed, in a huff, Goldsmith took two or three doses of the forbidden remedy. The next morning he was very weak, and according to Hawes's account said he "wished he had taken my friendly advice." Dr. Fordyce and Dr. Turton were called into consultation, but Goldsmith died. Thereupon, much discussion raged as to the cause of his death, and how far it had been retarded or hastened by James's Powders.¹ Hawes gave his querulous version of the matter in a pamphlet of forty-five pages entitled: *An Account of the late Dr. Goldsmith's illness, so far as related to the exhibition of Dr. James's Powders, together with Remarks on the Use and Abuse of Powerful Medicines in the beginning of fevers and other acute diseases.* It was dedicated to Sir Joshua Reynolds and

¹What seems to be an authoritative statement about Goldsmith's death will be found in *Notes and Queries*, July 4th, 1925. The writer, Frederick A. Pottle, of Yale University, decides that James's Powders caused no more than a complication, as Goldsmith was already suffering from a dangerous illness, Pyelitis (inflammation of the kidney), which in any case would have proved fatal six months or a year later.

(D^r James's Powder for
F E V E R S ,
 And other Inflammatory Distempers . . .
Published by Virtue of
 His Majesty's Royal Letters Patent :)

WILL remove (as has been Experienced in many thousand Cases) any
 continual Acute *Fever* in a few Hours, though attended with Convulsions
 Light-headedness, and the worst Symptoms : But if taken in the Beginning
 of a Fever, *one Dose* is generally sufficient to perform a Cure .

These POWDERS are Sold only by J. NEWBERY, at
*The Bible and Sun in St. Paul's Church Yard, over against the North-Door of the
 Church, at 2. 6^d the two Doses; with good Allowance to those who buy them for
 Charitable Uses or to Sell again*

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Edmund Burke, and ran into four editions. It is a curious consideration that if James's Powders did in fact hasten Goldsmith's end, he should have given the medicine a gratuitous literary advertisement a few years earlier. In *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes*, which is generally attributed to Goldsmith, there is this passage : " Care and discontent shortened the days of little Margery's father. He was seized with a violent fever in a place where Dr. James's Powder was not to be had, and where he died miserably." The third edition (1766) of this nursery tale contained an advertisement of Dr. James's Powders for fevers, small-pox, measles, colds, etc., price 2s. 6d.

The original recipe, containing the secret of the ingredients used in the compounding of James's Powders, passed to the family of the Doctor's eldest son, Robert Harcourt James (1757-1801). The remedy was held to be a specific for the most diversified complaints. Horace Walpole was its greatest champion. Meeting Lord Waldegrave, who was looking very ill, he said : " Go home at once, and take James's Powder. I assure you it is the one thing in the world that does good in conditions like yours." Lord Waldegrave acted on the advice, and died of small-pox two days later, in 1763. Nevertheless, Walpole was just as enthusiastic for James's Powders years after, and was very angry with Dr. Bouvart for refusing to give them to Madame du Deffand on her death-bed, saying the medicine would cure almost anything except the villainy of physicians. Describing the death of Lord Lyttelton in 1773, Sir William Pepys writes : " After the Physi-

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cians had declar'd on Sunday evening that there was no hope, we resolv'd to give him Dr. James's Powder . . . and the effect of that medicine upon him was almost Miraculous, for tho' he seem'd expiring on the Sunday evening, He was so much restor'd by it that, on Monday night, we began to entertain very sanguine hopes of his recovery, but alas! the fatal symptoms return'd, and on Tuesday the greatest and best of men breath'd his last. . . ."¹

Cowper, the poet, also contributed his testimonials in favour of James's Powders. In a letter of January 14th, 1786, he writes: "I am bound to honour James's Powder, not only for the services it has often rendered to myself, but still more for having been the means of preserving a life (Mrs. Unwin's) more valuable to Society than mine is ever likely to be."

And on a later occasion, November 29th, 1790, describing the effects of a cold, he says: "It proved the most obstinate that I ever had to deal with, so obstinate that I have but just conquered it even by the aid of James's Powder."

Opinion on the efficacy of Dr. James's Powders was thus sharply differentiated, but contemporary judgment was in the main favourable and not confined to England. Interesting proof that the Powders were used in Italy exists in the Medicine Chest of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, wherein a drawer still bears the printed label "Dr. James's Powders."²

¹ *A Later Pepys*. By Alice C. C. Gaussen (Lane, 1904).

² This Medicine Chest was exhibited at Mr. Henry S. Wellcome's Historical Medical Museum, 54a, Wigmore Street, in 1913.

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Dr. Robert James was a very little man in stature, and possessed of an irritable, violent temper. At the same time he was just and frank in his dealings—when the storm was over. Probably owing to his diminutive height, he resolutely refused to enter the Army, where his father, a major, and many other relatives had distinguished themselves, with the result that he was disinherited, although the eldest son. With the aid of a small property at Hampton Wick, which could not be alienated from him, he made his own way in the world, matriculating at St. John's College, Oxford, in 1722.¹ His early years in the medical profession were strenuous and straitened, and he was not unacquainted, owing to debt, with the Fleet Prison (where his first marriage, with the daughter of a baronet, took place). In proof of his application to his profession, the story is told that in his student days, when living in one room, he purchased a corpse from a resurrection man, dissecting it by day and keeping the body under his bed at night, until, at last, the atmosphere of the room caused his friends to intervene. Completely did James overcome all difficulties and succeed in his calling, for at his death he left a fortune of £8,000 a year. In addition to his residence, 33, Bruton Street, he bought a large extent of land in Lambeth Marsh, where he erected a fine mansion. Concerning these two houses of the Doctor, his grandson, G. P. R. James, related :

“ I remember that house, 33, Bruton Street,

¹ He obtained his medical degree at Cambridge in 1728, so he was associated with both Universities.

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well, for it remained in the family till I was sixteen or seventeen years of age. It was afterwards purchased by the Zoological Society ; and a very fine house it was, with spacious rooms and immense, beautifully sculptured mantel-pieces of Carrara marble. Two staircases, separated by a thick wall, but communicating by doors on each floor, were in the centre of the house, occupying about one-third of the whole, and inconveniently cutting off one splendid drawing-room from the other, and the library from the dining-room. Yes, I remember it well ; and it makes me sad to remember it—for where are all the old familiar faces ? Almost all gone. Where are the pleasant hours, the games of hide-and-seek, up the great staircase, down the iron staircase ; in at this door, out of the other ? All gone. Where the health that seemed as if nothing could shake it—where the activity that never could tire ? Gone, gone.

“ A great part of Lambeth was then¹ mere mire and marsh ; and, whether moved by family eccentricity or because he foresaw that the property would some day be valuable, my grandfather bought the fields and swamps—from the spot very near the ‘ old marsh gate,’ as a turn-pike was called (in what is now Vine Street), to another road² running to London Bridge. He drained the marsh, collected the water into an artificial lake—perhaps canal would be a better name—and formed therein, with true Louis Quatorze taste, an *île d’amour* ; laid out lawns and gardens ; and built a splendid mansion,

¹ The middle of the eighteenth century.

² Now, no doubt, Stamford Street.

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since transformed into Whitmore's great Brewery.¹

"Part of the house Mr. Whitmore retained for his private use ; and he once asked me to dine with him in my grandfather's great dining-room, which he assured me was the finest room in England ; I did not accept his invitation, because I feared my digestion, even though he promised to show me a bullet in the wall, which had been fired at my grandfather's head as he sat there alone one evening. I doubt not the old gentleman made a good many enemies by the violence of his disposition, but he also made somehow very many friends, and amongst them were some of the finest intellects and noblest hearts of his day—Samuel Johnson, David Garrick, and that Marquis of Rockingham whose abilities as a statesman have been questioned by opponents and whose high qualities as a man and a gentleman have been, I

¹ The house seems to have stood on or near the site of Waterloo Station and what is now known as Belvedere Road, part of the Canterbury Archbishopric Estates. In the possession of the Ecclesiastical Commission there is an old Estate Book, wherein, under date 1798, the name of Mrs. James appears in connection with a large block of property she leased in the vicinity mentioned. Dr. Robert James had died some twenty-two years earlier. Dr. James's laboratory is marked on an old map just to the south of the bend in Vine Street. In Thomas Allen's *History of Lambeth* (1826) occurs the following description :

"There is a considerable brewery here, called the Belvedere, the property of Mrs. Edwards, and opposite the private house, attached to it, is a long canal of water. The site of this brewery was formerly Dr. James's laboratory. Adjoining the brewery is the steam flour mills of Mr. Matthews."

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believe, admitted by all who knew him. He was no ordinary man, and in polite learning was equal to—in sound qualities superior to—his friend and political ally, the Earl of Chatham.

“I still possess a beautiful gem, dug up at Tusculum, and given by Rockingham to my grandfather. It represents, in intaglio most exquisitely cut, a man with the conventional face of a faun, either engaged in sculpturing a vase or tapping a vessel of wine. Perhaps the latter interpretation is the more harmonious with the habits of the giver and the receiver, if the traditions of my family are correct. There were many stories current in our house, when I was young, of the revels in that *île d’amour* in the artificial lake when the labours of the day were over, and the statesman unbent, and the severe moralist changed his tea for punch, and the wit was at his culminating hour—revels which Boswell has not recorded, and to which probably he was never admitted.

“One anecdote of my grandfather, in connection with his intercourse with Lord Rockingham, I must mention as illustrative of that peculiar pliability of his character to a joke, whether perpetrated by himself or others. The Marquis had remained the night at Lambeth, and was walking around the grounds on the following morning with his host, who had the same unfortunate fondness for farming which has since affected his grandson. In passing near the pig-stys, they heard a most unusual outcry among the unmelodious brood, and sauntering up, just after the beasts had been fed, they perceived that some careless servant

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had thrown with the hogwash a silver spoon into the trough. Lord Rockingham probably expected a burst of rage from his irritable friend at the expense of the negligent servant ; but a jest presented itself, and my grandfather was quite placable. ' No wonder,' he said, ' that the brutes are quarrelling, when they have only got one spoon amongst so many.' The joke was a bad one ; but it must have had some significance for the ear of a prime minister.

" One more anecdote of those times I tell, both because it bears upon some curious questions in regard to which very opposite opinions have been entertained by persons of powerful intellect, and because both my father and my uncle were present, and could therefore vouch for the facts.

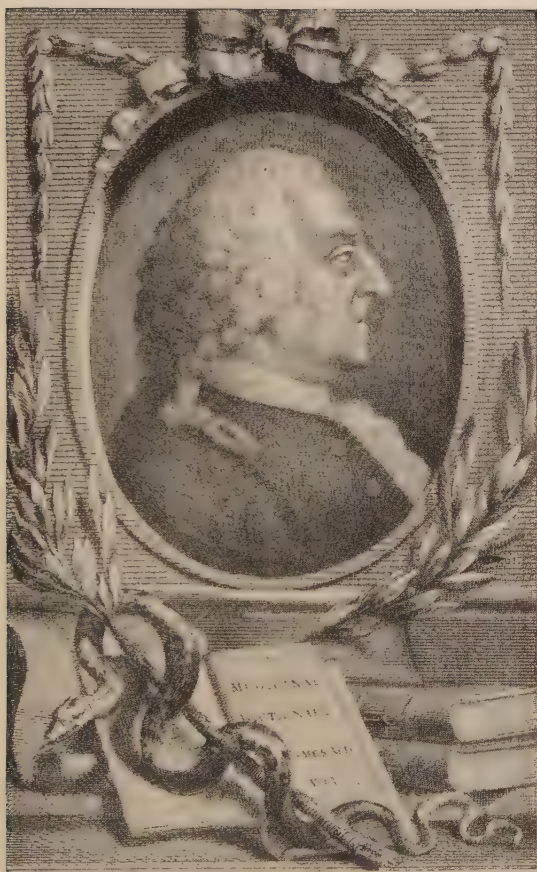
" One evening in June, just as the sun had set, and while it was still bright twilight, my father, then a lad, was standing at the hall door of the house at Lambeth. At the same hour a young foot-boy, named Richard White, about twenty years of age, who had been brought some twelve months before from Staffordshire, was performing his nightly task of closing the outside shutters, which had been put up after my grandfather had been shot at in his dining-room. The lad was at a little distance from my father on the side of the house next the lawn, when he suddenly stopped at his work and ran to the door as pale as ashes. My father caught him by the arm, asking what was the matter, when the lad replied : ' Oh, Sir, I have seen my sister. I am sure she is dead. She passed close by me with her face all covered with blotches.

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I am sure she is dead.' My father drew him into the library, where my grandfather was sitting with my uncle George, and there the lad repeated the same tale. He was soothed, and asked if he had any reason to believe his sister was ill. He replied that he had not, but on the contrary had heard from her six weeks before, and that then she was quite well. Still, however, he persisted in the same story, that he had just seen her, as distinctly as ever he had seen her in life, that her face was covered with spots, and that he was sure she was dead. A few days later arrived the news of her death on that day from small-pox."¹

Many amusing anecdotes could be told of Dr. Robert James, his temper and his ways. On one occasion, when dining in his house in Bruton Street, a roast pig was served. Being somewhat of a gourmand, the cooking on this day failed to please him, and in a furious state of wrath the little man grasped the offending dish—pig and all—strutted to the window, and threw the whole into the street below. There happened to be passing at that identical moment a beau, clad in all the elaborate velvet, lace, and periwig of the day; and upon his exquisite confection and head descended the pig with concomitants of gravy and stuffing and breaking china. The outraged beau forced his way into the house,

¹ G. P. R. James utilised this incident in some contributions to *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, in 1853, entitled *Extracts from the Portfolio of an Excitement Seeker*. He called it *A True Ghost Story*, but the detail of the girl's death from small-pox is omitted, which is curious, as it is the most important and confirmatory point of the story.



DOCTOR ROBERT JAMES,
Grandfather of G. P. R. JAMES.

[Facing page 22..

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drew his sword, as did the equally irate James, and a duel without preliminaries commenced. The combatants were separated before serious mischief was done.

Like all the James family, the diminutive Doctor had a strange passion for four-footed beasts. At his Lambeth house there were no fewer than seventy-two dogs, not a pack of hounds but an indiscriminate collection, wherein curs predominated. At the mews in Bruton Street was stabling for twenty-seven horses, and always fully occupied. But the Doctor was no judge of horseflesh either, and his old coachman related in after years to G. P. R. James the diverting history of a certain team of four chestnuts with white feet. These horses proved so unruly that they went near to killing the Doctor, and he sold them. Some time after he purchased another team, four bright bays with black feet and manes. The coachman, when the new horses arrived, shook his head and appeared dubious about something. As soon as they were harnessed, the bays proved as refractory as their predecessors. "I believe 'ems the same horses, sir," said the coachman. A burst of indignant rage from his master silenced further observations; but as the days went by, and sponge and rack-comb were constantly applied, the manes became red and the black feet white, and the former chestnut team reappeared in the stables.

Dr. Robert James married, as his second wife, the daughter of Sir James Clarke, and his family consisted of two daughters (one witnessed all the horrors of the French Revolution and,

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incidentally, refused an offer of marriage from Robespierre) and three sons, Robert, George, and Pinkston.

The youngest son, Dr. Pinkston James (1766-1830), father of the novelist, in early life served in the English Navy as a midshipman. As a boy of fourteen he fought in H.M.S. *Invincible* at the first battle off Cape St. Vincent in 1780, when the Spanish Admiral, Don Juan de Langara, was captured.¹ Pinkston James next saw a good deal of service under Captain Stanhope in the frigate *Pegasus* in the West Indies. He fought in the American War of Independence, and took part in the attack upon Connecticut under the renegade Benedict Arnold, when many atrocities were committed. Pinkston James, seeing a drunken soldier throwing fugitives into the flames, when New London was sacked, tried to arrest the man, who, perceiving the young officer was not in his branch of the service, told him "to go to the devil." James thereupon shot the soldier through the head, and, after subsequent inquiry, the affair was by unanimous consent hushed up. James also took part in Rodney's action against De Grasse, 1782; but he never liked the Navy, and soon after adopted the paternal profession of medicine. He studied for this in Edinburgh, where, no doubt, he met his future Scotch wife, for it was in St. Andrew's Kirk, Edinburgh, that Pinkston James was married to Jean Churnside, on December

¹ This was also the first naval engagement in which the Duke of Clarence (later King William IV) took part, as a boy of fifteen.

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26th, 1791. Soon after, the pair returned to London, where for many years Pinkston James practised as a physician at 12, George Street, Hanover Square; and it was in this house, a corner one facing St. George's Church, that George Payne Rainsford James was born on August 9th—but in what year exactly remains a trifle uncertain. It has hitherto been generally stated that the event took place in 1799, and when James died on June 9th, 1860, it was announced that he was in his sixtieth year. But in the baptismal register of St. George's, Hanover Square, it is recorded that the baptism of G. P. R. James was performed on April 5th, 1802; and before the date of the birthday, August 9th, the year "1801" has been inserted, apparently at a later date. According to this the child was eight months old before he was baptised, and the delay is said to have been owing to the ill state of the mother's health. If James had really been born in 1799, it is hardly likely that the baptism would have been postponed for nearly three years awaiting the improvement of Mrs. Pinkston James's health. Further, G. P. R. James himself stated that he "was born in George Street, Hanover Square," but his father does not appear in the *Directory* as the occupant of No. 12 before 1802. In 1799 Lord Cowper (who succeeded the Duke of Newcastle) is stated to be the occupier of the house: though possibly Pinkston James purchased the remainder of Lord Cowper's lease about 1799 and the change was not noted at once in the *Directory*.

Like Charles Robert Maturin, G. P. R. James

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was, in fact, not sure of the year of his own birth, and finally decided on what would seem to be a wrong date. In his manuscript autobiography he stated :

“ I was born in George Street, Hanover Square, in London, on the ninth of August in a year the date of which has always been doubtful to myself. The Parish Register states 1800, but my old nurse, who remained attached to me till her death, always maintained that I was born in the preceding year, that the state of my mother's health prevented my baptism at the time, and that the date was placed twelve months too late in the register by a mistake of the clerk. It must be remembered that at that time the reforming hand of Rickman had not visited the English vestry rooms and that registers were kept in a somewhat careless manner, even in the fashionable Metropolitan Parish. The statement of good Nelly Anderson, therefore, may have been correct ; and moreover I would, nine times out of ten, take the memory of an old nurse in preference to all the registers in the world.”

However, this will not quite do. The present writer has inspected twice the entry of James's baptism at St. George's, Hanover Square (the registers of which church, by the way, were not carelessly kept at the date in question), and the year “ 1801 ” (not 1800) is quite clearly inserted before the birthday. In the absence of any conclusive proof to the contrary, it must be assumed that this date was added by the instructions and information of the child's parents, and that being so, George Payne



GEORGE STREET, AND ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH,
HANOVER SQUARE, IN 1812.

G. P. R. JAMES was born in the end house, facing the Church porch, in 1801.
From the print in Ackermann's "Repository of Arts."

[Facing page 26.]

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Rainsford¹ James was born on August 9th, 1801. This fact would be in accordance with the old nurse's statement that he was born in the year preceding his baptism, which, as already related, took place on April 5th, 1802. There were distinguished neighbours in George Street who may have noticed the christening party crossing from No. 12 to the Church opposite. Next door but two, at No. 9, was Richard Brinsley Sheridan; at No. 10, William Pyne ("Ephraim Hardcastle"), painter and author; at No. 25, John Singleton Copley, the portrait-painter, and father of Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Chancellor.

¹ His second and third names came from family connections; one of his aunts married a Mr. Rainsford.

CHAPTER II

Childhood and Youth

GEORGE PAYNE RAINSFORD JAMES was not very happy in his childhood. His mother died early ; he never mentioned her in after years, one of his sons states. Consequently, he was neglected and thrown back on his resources. He himself related of this period :

“ My early education was a good deal neglected. During my childish years, when I studied nothing, I observed much which I have never forgotten ; I possessed from a very early period an extraordinary memory. I was, perhaps, a clever, but certainly a very idle child, and I was more than six years old before I even learned to read. My delight, even at a very early age, was to hear stories of *The Arabian Nights*¹ read aloud ; and an elder brother, now no more, used occasionally so to indulge me. One day, however, when either business or pleasure stood in the way of his affording me that gratification, he answered my importunities by saying, ‘ You stupid little fellow, why do you not learn to read yourself ? ’ I remember the effect produced upon my mind as if it were

¹ George Meredith, also a motherless child, found his chief pleasure in *The Arabian Nights* as a boy.

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but yesterday. I resolved that he should never address such a reproach to me again ; and in a marvellously short space of time, thanks to dogged application, I rendered myself independent of all assistance in my native tongue at least."

It is both the tritest and truest of sayings that the boy is father of the man, and James is another example of its veracity. Not only did his childhood adumbrate imaginative narrative and adventure, but at a very early age he showed signs of that roving, restless disposition that accompanied him through life. He was only about five years of age when he ran away from home to see a review of troops, and after much hue and cry was eventually discovered, black with powder, sitting on a drum, drinking strong liquor with a private who had picked him up and formed a rapid friendship. Probably this incident caused Dr. Pinkston James to consider the matter of his son's education. George was sent to a small preparatory school conducted by a French emigré at Greenwich, and then to the much larger establishment of the Rev. William Carmalt, The Great House, at Putney.¹ This man was a pedagogue of the old school, whose scholastic creed was then orthodox in

¹ An incident which occurred at this school was described by James in a short story entitled *The Drowned Boy and His Mother*, which formed a portion of his *Portfolio of an Excitement Seeker*, in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, 1853. Carmalt Gardens, off the Upper Richmond Road at Putney, now covers the site of Mr. Carmalt's school house and grounds. Mr. Carmalt's daughter became the mother of Mr. H. Festing Jones, the friend and biographer of Samuel Butler.

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the belief that flogging and the Classics comprised education. His verdict on young James was "a very quick, but very idle fellow." The boy, however, had an extraordinary aptitude for languages, particularly modern ones. James said in later life :

"Very early I made myself master of the French language ; and at fifteen knew more of its niceties than I do now. Of Italian I also acquired a certain degree of knowledge, so as to read the prose writers in that language with ease, even as a boy, and to fancy that I understood Dante. . . . I was eager also to learn German. . . . Such were my favourite studies in boyhood, if I except that of drawing, for which I had an hereditary taste, and arithmetic and mathematics, which, from I know not what perversity of mind, have always seemed a relief to me after the pursuit of other tasks. . . . When at home for the holidays, I used occasionally to amuse myself with analysing and re-constructing some of the papers in *The Rambler*. . . . Still, however, *The Arabian Nights* were my great delight ; and shortly after leaving school, having for some time amused myself with studying the Persian tongue, after having sadly failed in mastering Arabic, I threw off some half-dozen tales in imitation of my favourite narratives, which were afterwards published under the title of *The String of Pearls*.¹ The poems of the late Mr. Southey then caught my fancy, and so fixed themselves upon my boyish mind,

¹ Published in 1832, many years after their composition, which took place before James had reached his seventeenth birthday.



MR. CARMALT'S SCHOOL AT PUTNEY.

G. P. R. JAMES and Charles Canning (Earl Canning) were pupils here.

By an old print sent by Mr. H. Festing Jones.

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that in the delirium of a severe illness, my ravings were alone of Thalaba, and Kehama, and Roderick. . . . The history of my own and other countries was a subject of which I was ever fond. Another source of intense pleasure was found in the narratives of celebrated travellers ; and it is impossible to describe the wild interest I took, as a schoolboy, in the adventures of Park and Bruce, or in those of the earlier discoverers in the Pacific, and in South America. I used to lay out with a young school-fellow¹ . . . long plans of expeditions for future years, in which we were to perform all sorts of wonders, and achieve the most unheard-of enterprises. . . . I had also acquired in boyhood two habits not very common, I believe, with boys. One was to analyse all my own sensations, and the other to examine the results of other people's conduct and apply the lesson to myself."

Such was the youthful G. P. R. James—vividly imaginative, rather morbidly self-introspective, devoted to reading, yet longing for travel and adventure, altogether a contradictory, curious temperament, but an interesting boy. How desultory and eccentric was his reading in childhood is proved by the fact that Voltaire and Hobbes's *Leviathan* were among his early studies. So were the earlier English novelists, and, according to his own account, their influence was not wholly beneficial. He said : " The effect of reading, at a very early period, almost all the works of our ancient and looser novelists, whatever might be the final moral of the tale, had not upon me, at least, that which I am willing to

¹ C. W. H. Ranken. See later, page 40.

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believe the authors sought to produce in all. . . . I do believe that in the training too often given to youth, wounds are received which are never wholly healed. I may speak, perchance, from sad experience."

But James's own early training was more or less on the lines of his own predilections, for his father gave little attention to the matter. The boy never received any religious instruction at home. His subsequent life and literary work were not affected by this educational looseness he regretted, for both were blameless in a moral sense. But undoubtedly the verbosity and diffuse detail characteristic of the novels of G. P. R. James may be attributable to his early acquaintance with the vast number of words he acquired in pursuit of his rather undigested knowledge of many and various languages.

As a boy, G. P. R. James was acquainted with Byron, to whom he was devoted. The poet used to call him "Little Devil," and was so much interested in this curious lad, whose imaginative, adventurous, lax mind, was somewhat akin to his own, that he wanted to take young James abroad as a companion. But here, apparently, belated parental duty was roused to action, for although G. P. R. James went to the continent about this time, 1815, there is no evidence to show that he accompanied Byron, who did not, in fact, leave England until April, 1816.

According to the anonymous author of *Uncensored Recollections* (1924), James was originally introduced to Byron at 13, Piccadilly Terrace by Samuel Rogers :

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“ Samuel Rogers brought the lad G. P. R. James—as I heard him tell my father in Paris—to see the great Childe Harold and found him writing and chewing tobacco to keep (as he thought and explained to Rogers) his fat down ; dressed in white duck trousers and a green baize jacket—‘ A damned ugly, fat, pasty-faced man—a great disappointment to me!’ said James.”

As is well known, the friends of Byron never could agree in recollecting which was the poet's lame foot. Moore says : “ It will, indeed, with difficulty be believed what uncertainty I found upon this point, even among those most intimate with him.” Moore, from his own recollection and other evidence, decided that it was Byron's right foot that was malformed ; but Leigh Hunt always asserted it was the left, and in this opinion he is supported by G. P. R. James, who “ had frequent opportunities of noticing Byron's lameness. Upon a certain occasion, when they happened to meet at a fashionable hatter's in the Strand, his attention was particularly attracted to it. When he came in, the poet was seated before a table with his feet crossed under it. The boy (for boy he was) being somewhat piqued because Byron had not interrupted the conversation in which he was engaged, to be civil to him, withdrew to the other side of the shop. Standing there, leaning against a counter, he satisfied his own mind that the lame foot was the left one. . . . Mr. James assured me that the face of the Macedonian monarch in Paul Veronese's celebrated picture of *Alexander in the Tent of Darius*, in Venice, is the exact image

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of his lordship. Standing before it one day with a lady, he mentioned the extraordinary likeness to her, when the cicerone who accompanied them said : ' Ah ! sir, I see that you knew my old master well. Many a time since his death I have stood and gazed upon that face, which recalls his own so vividly.' ”¹

In 1811 James accompanied his father to Scotland, and returned home by sea. During the voyage, by stress of weather they were driven to Norway. They had a company of soldiers on board, and one night when the ship was attacked by a French privateer there was a miniature sea-fight, which young James witnessed by the light of the famous comet of 1811,² and, for the first time in his life, at the age of ten, he had the experience of live bullets whistling about him. The privateer endeavoured to use her grappling irons, but was driven off by a final volley from the English soldiers.³

The events so far recorded all took place prior to 1815. James seems to have left school early, about the age of thirteen, and after a brief study of medicine begged his father to let him embark upon a more adventurous career, the Navy for preference. “ No,” said his father, “ you may go into the Army, if you like, though it is the life of a dog ; but you shall not go into the Navy, for that’s the life of a damned dog.” On the statement of his son, into the Army the young G. P. R. James accordingly went, before he was fourteen, about the time of Napoleon’s

¹ *Memories of Many Men.* By Maunsell B. Field.

² See later, page 217.

³ See later, page 217.

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escape from Elba. Consequently, he was at once sent on active service, and very nearly participated in Waterloo. His company was one of those which arrived too late to take part in the battle, but he witnessed the horrors of its aftermath. He stated that the dead bodies of men and horses were piled up above the tops of the lofty hedges, and from the fact that he saw the corpses of French troops behind the lines of the Allies he deduced that these men had succeeded in fighting their way through to the centre of the victors' position. James also said that the French prisoners, as they were brought in, had to be protected by the English from massacre by the Prussians. James was wounded in one of the skirmishes after Waterloo and—according to his son's account—taken prisoner. In after years, when he became the intimate friend of Wellington, the Duke on one occasion said in his abrupt way to James: "You were at Waterloo, I think?" "No, I was not, I am sorry to say." "Why 'sorry to say'?" rejoined Wellington; "if you had been there, you might not have been here now." James used to tell another story of Wellington, who, hearing some officers talking of those Belgian allies who had "run away," cut in with these words: "Run! who wouldn't have run away under such a fire? I am sure I should—if I had known of any place to run to."

It is very unfortunate that the fragment of G. P. R. James's autobiography does not extend to 1815, the year in which his alleged military experiences took place: these accounts are based on the statements of his son, Charles

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Leigh James, and of his friend, Maunsell B. Field, who recorded his conversations with James in his book, *Memories of Many Men*. One cannot avoid the suspicion that James, in later life, with the imagination of a romance writer, somewhat enhanced the details of his adventures with the Army soon after Waterloo. Assuming that he was born in 1801, he would still have been under fourteen years of age in June, 1815. He could quite well have accompanied a regiment abroad as a drummer-boy, or as a private soldier, for a boy of ten fought with the Guards at the Alma, and there were many instances even in the late war of big boys of fourteen enlisting and passing for eighteen years of age. But James liked to convey the impression that he had been an officer. Youthful cornets of fifteen were common enough at the time of Waterloo, but one of thirteen would seem to be somewhat of a military prodigy. The army lists of the period record that there was a George James who was gazetted ensign in the 71st (Highland) Foot on July 20th, 1815, and who retired on half-pay on July 25th, 1816, after just one year's service. This might indeed be G. P. R. James, but it is doubtful. The date attached to the appointment of this George James is more than a month after Waterloo, and it is quite certain that G. P. R. James reached the battlefield in June, 1815. In the General Preface to the collected edition of his novels he states: "At a very early age I went to the Continent alone." In the absence of any definite proof that he was actually in the Army, it is reasonable to surmise that he was sent to

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Belgium as a messenger in charge of some papers ; his father's friendship with Lord Liverpool, who was interested in the youthful G. P. R. James, and later intended to help him towards a political career, justifies the supposition. Arrived at his destination, where the English troops were quartered, James may have camped with the officers, and thus witnessed the scenes following the battle which he related in after years to his son and Maunsell B. Field and other friends. Probably the real facts are reflected in James's *Extracts from the Portfolio of an Excitement Seeker* (which appeared in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, 1853), wherein the narrator goes abroad as a boy, and visits the field of Waterloo the day after the great battle.

After peace was proclaimed, James remained on the Continent, where—to use his own words—“alone, unguided, and undirected,” he wandered “over a considerable portion of Europe, and mingling with many classes and varieties of my fellow-creatures, I learned the necessity, and endeavoured to practise the art, of investigating keenly, and judging rapidly, the characters of those with whom I was brought in contact.” These “investigations,” among many other adventures, involved him in a duel with a French officer on some question concerning Waterloo. The youthful James had the satisfaction of disabling his adversary in the sword arm.¹

¹ The imaginative Maunsell B. Field, in his *Memories of Many Men*, stated that James killed his man and later presented him, Field, with the pistols used in the duel. This is altogether incorrect, for swords were used, and the French officer was not killed.

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At Bordeaux, it seems, he first saw Washington Irving, who later became his friend and one who encouraged James to pursue a literary career. In after years James gave Philip Pendleton Cooke, the Virginian poet, the following account of his meeting with Washington Irving. Returning to his inn, and passing along a dark passage, James perceived in front of him a man, dressed in black, carrying a candle and slowly ascending the old-fashioned staircase. On the landing the man stopped, and, holding up his candle, looked at a cat lying there. The cat regarded the stranger with a frightened, surprised expression ; the stranger gazed at the cat for some time mutely, and then said sadly : " Ah! pussy! pussy! If you had seen as much trouble as I have, you would not be surprised at anything." He then proceeded on his way, and James, who had heard that Washington Irving was in Bordeaux, said to himself : " That can be nobody in the world but Irving," which proved to be the fact.

James's travels made him familiar with practically all France, Spain, and Germany, and many of his experiences were introduced later in *Morley Ernstein*. Long before any book of his was published he had, from early youth, essayed literary composition, in the same style as his subsequent novels, though these juvenile efforts, he said, were shorter and carelessly written. On his return to England, nothing very definite in the way of a profession was proposed for him. At that time the James family was still wealthy, his father was physician

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to the Prince Regent,¹ and there was some intention that George should enter political life. This plan, owing to the death of Lord Liverpool, came to nothing, and from a period of social pleasure combined with literary dalliance James gradually merged into a professional, laborious man of letters. He relates of this time :

“ Till I had walked some way in manhood, my own views in life, and those which my relatives entertained for me, tended to far drier, though more ambitious, objects than the pursuit of literature ; but various political changes, which took place between the years 1825 and 1827, closed the door upon expectations not altogether unjustly entertained. . . . Though I had acquired, I know not well how, some reputation for clever idleness, and had, perhaps, in the eyes of the world, no great zeal for anything but the chase of pleasure, I had not been so careless of deeper studies as was generally supposed by most of my ordinary acquaintances, and I was more than once amused to find, when at a late hour of the day I appeared in the busy thoroughfares of society, after having been seen almost till break of dawn at opera and ball, that many, even of those who knew me well, imagined I had passed the intervening period in sleep, when, in reality, I had spent many a morning hour with ancient friends in leathern garments within the doors of the British Museum ; many a *jeu d'esprit*, many a light tale, many a bitter pasquinade (now regretted), which had fallen without effort from my pen

¹ Hence arose the foolish canard that the novelist's initials —G. P. R. J.—stood for George Prince Regent James.

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(though often attributed to others), had attracted attention, and gained some applause."

In 1825, when James was twenty-four years old, he commenced his first notable—and considered by many critics his best—novel, *Richelieu*; but the work was not destined to see publication till some years later. As so often has been the case with subsequently successful authors, James received no encouragement from his relatives to enter seriously upon a literary career. His father, indeed, descanting on the horrors of mediocrity, declared that his son was unequal to long and intricate narrative. But Washington Irving, whose friendship G. P. R. James had gained abroad, gave encouraging advice to continue, and so the budding author went on quietly with his romance and other work. In 1826 he was again abroad,¹ and from Rennes is dated, on January 16th, the earliest James letter that seems to have survived. It is addressed to C. W. H. Ranken, at Bristol, the schoolfellow, no doubt, with whom he had in boyhood planned all manner of enterprises and travels in distant lands, for that bond of ancient agreement is evident from the subject that occupies much of this rather remarkable letter of a young man.

"RANKENO AMICO CARO CARISSIMO,

"That unfortunate Gentleman upon whose back all the evils of this world have been laid from time immemorial, I mean the Devil, has certainly (to give him his due) been tormenting my poor friend and schoolfellow pretty hand-

¹ Apparently he held some small diplomatic appointment.

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somely. What with your cough in the first place and your abscess in the second you have been quite a martyr, but remember the Martyrs always reach Heaven at last, and I doubt not that your sufferings will soon be over, and that in the little Paradise you have planned for yourself some five or six miles from London (rather a cockney distance, by the by) you will enjoy the happiness of the blest with those you love best. I think I shall make the same compact with you that I have made with Becknell, namely, that in after years when time has laid his heavy hand upon us all, and when you are happy in your children and your children's children, you will still give the crusty old Bachelor a place at your fireside, and your Sophia shall furnish me with strong green tea, and I will take my pinch of snuff and tell you Grandam's tales to amuse the little ones, or recount the wonderful things I have seen in my travels, or growl at the degeneracy of the world and praise the good old days when I was young and gay and did many a wondrous deed for 'Ladye-love and pride of Chivalrie,' and you shall forgive many a cross word and ill-tempered remark for old friendship's sake, and say, 'He was not always so, but this world's sorrows have soured his temper, poor old man.'

"You tell me to continue my History of Bretagne, but in sooth I know not where I left off. Memory, that lazy slut, has forgot to mend her pocket, which has had a hole in it for some time, and the consequence is that of all I give her to keep for me the dross alone remains and the better part is dropped by the wayside.

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But I am not at all in the mood to give any descriptions. I am philosophical and, therefore, will tell you a story.

"In that mighty empire which exceeds all others as much in wisdom as it does in size—in the time of Fo-Whang, who was the six hundredth emperor of the ninety-seventh dynasty which has sat on the throne of Cathay, there lived a philosopher whose doctrine was such that every Chinese, from the mandarin who enjoys the light of the celestial presence to the waterman who paddles his junk in the river of Canton, became proselytes.

"Every one knows that every Chinese from generation to generation is in manners, customs, dress, and appearance so precisely what his father was before him, that a certain Mandarin who had thought proper to fall into a trance for a century or so, waking from his sleep and entering his paternal mansion, found his great-grandson, who was at dinner, so strikingly like himself that he was struck dumb with astonishment. There were the same wide thin eyebrows, there were the same beautiful black eyes no bigger than peas, there was the same delicate tea-coloured complexion. He wore the same silk his ancestor had worn, and the same chopsticks carried his food to his mouth. The great-grandson instantly recognized his predecessor, but the resuscitated Mandarin, forgetting the lapse of years, mistook his descendant for his own grandfather, and, each casting themselves on their belly, wriggled towards each other with all the symptoms of respect. Such being the laudable reverence of this people

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for all customs sanctified by time, it may be well supposed that that doctrine was magnificent which could take a Chinese by the ear, and such indeed was the doctrine of the Philosopher, namely, that wisdom is folly and folly is wisdom. Which he proved thus : ' The end of wisdom,' said the Philosopher, ' is to be happy. And the fewer are our wants the fewer can be our disappointments, and consequently the happier we are. The fool has fewer wants than the wise man and the ignorant less wishes than the learned, and therefore the fool being the happiest is the wisest and the wise man is but a fool.' Now the wise men (even in China) being lamentably in the minority, the Philosopher had all the voices for himself. Now there was a young man named To-hi, who never pretended to be a wise man but was nevertheless not a fool, and going to the Philosopher he said to him—' Father, I cannot help thinking that your doctrine means more than it appears to mean, and I think I have found its application.' ' Speak freely, my son,' replied the Philosopher, ' and tell me what you suppose it to be.' ' I imagine,' said To-hi, ' that you wish to inculcate that men seek for wisdom above their power and destroy their happiness by examining too near the objects which produce it. For I remark that all that is beautiful in nature as well as in life is little better than a delusion, which to be enjoyed must be seen from a distance. When I look at the hills of Tartary, they seem from here grand and soft and blue and changing all sorts of colours from the reflection of the Sun, but when I approach them I find nothing but heaps of

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barren rocks and frightful deserts. If we regard the finest skin with a magnifying glass, it is like coarsest cloth of Surat, and the sunset that we admire for its soft splendour to the nations on the edge of the horizon is but the glare of mid-day. Thus, then, we ought to enjoy whatever the world offers us without searching for faults, and be as happy as we can without seeking to be too wise. Is not this what you meant?' 'My son,' replied the Philosopher, 'like many other Philosophers I did not well know what I meant, and you, like many other commentators, have given an explanation which the author never intended.'

"Rennes, first of Feby.

"As you will see, my dear Ranken, this letter has been written half a century, but I have been wandering about the country and forgot to finish it before I went. Long before this, however, I hope you are fundamentally cured and prepared to sit up on your own bottom. Doubtless you will find a vast fund of nonsense in the former part of this epistle, but if it serves to give you a minute's amusement it will answer the object of yours sincerely,

"G. P. R. JAMES."

During the next two years James was assiduously occupied with more than one literary work, though as yet nothing was published in book form. By a happy chance the first part of *Richelieu*, which he had thrown aside uncompleted, came to the notice of Walter Scott, and it was his encouragement that finally placed James on the novelist's road

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to success. He thus describes the episode :

“ I was then totally unacquainted with Sir Walter Scott ; but a very old friend of my family¹ had the means, and was kind enough to use them, of shewing one volume of a romance I had written long before, and had cast aside, to that truly great and truly amiable man. Little knowing how much I exacted, I accompanied it by a letter, by no means, I believe, self-confident, requesting the great poet to read the volume, and tell me whether to persevere or to desist, promising, at the same time, to abide by his decision. A month of anxiety passed, and another went by, and no notice was taken ; a third, and I felt sure that Sir Walter either treated my request, though presented to him by a friend, as an impertinence—or else, unwilling to wound me by censure, left silence to imply that which he did not like to speak. I felt somewhat ashamed, somewhat mortified, and a good deal grieved ; but time passed, and I had forgotten the book and its fate, when one day, on returning from the country to London, I found a packet on my table containing the volume and a note. The opinion expressed in that note was more favourable than I had ever expected, and certainly more favourable than I deserved ; for Sir Walter Scott was one of the most lenient of critics, especially to the young. However, it told me to persevere, and I did so.”

¹ An aunt of G. P. R. James on his mother's side, one of the Churnsides, had been a fellow-pupil with Scott at a small seminary in Edinburgh, and her reminiscences of the boy Walter will be found in Chapter III of Lockhart's *Life of Scott*.

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With this distinguished cachet of approval, *Richelieu* found acceptance by Henry Colburn, of 8, New Burlington Street, who just previously, in 1828, had privately printed for James a poem in the Southey style entitled *The Ruined City*, which was consequently his first book. Though hitherto unknown to the greater public as an author, James seems to have had an intuition that he was about to make a name and take a prominent place in the literary world, for some months in advance of the appearance of *Richelieu* he wrote as follows to Charles Ollier (Colburn's Reader), who was the confidant and adviser of many of his contemporaries—from Shelley, Lamb, and Keats to Ainsworth and Meredith :

“ 12, George Street, Hanover Square.

“ 17 Oct. 1828.

“ My dear Sir,

“ . . . Not having personally the pleasure of Mr. Colburn's acquaintance, of course any business between him and myself must be basised on mutual interest, and my short diplomatic career has taught me that under such circumstances it is advisable for both parties to ascertain their relative positions.

“ You are perfectly aware that I can do without Mr. Colburn, but I am equally aware that he possesses means of pushing my work and raising me to fame which I cannot obtain if I publish for myself, whatever money I may spend upon the attempt. In the next place, the anxiety and worry would annoy me to a most excessive degree, and further it is my wish to

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found a connexion with a Bookseller of eminence with whom I may go through my future life with confidence and security. All these motives impel me to wish that Mr. Colburn and myself may be able to enter into an arrangement, but at the same time I will never undervalue what I believe to be a good work by accepting a despicable price for it. You, of course, will give him your unbiased opinion of the work and its value; and as you have now seen several of my writings in more than one style you will be able to tell him whether I am a man whose powers of mind are sufficient for him to maintain some degree of literary success or not. At the same time let me beg you to inform him that I am not one who, after he has aided me in raising my fame, will take advantage of his efforts in this respect to become exorbitant in my demands upon him. If he gives a liberal price for the work at present in his hands, I shall be willing to enter into any engagement with him to let him have the one I am now writing (*The Field of the Cloth of Gold*¹) at a stipulated price, whether the other be as successful as I anticipate or not. It is of course my object to make it his interest to push my book as much as possible, and liberality on his part will always engender liberality on mine. Inform him also that I am about to print nearly at the same time three other works—none of which will sell on account of their nature, but each (I have good reason to believe) will increase my Fame. Should he not like this, however, that matter

¹ Published in 1830 as *Darnley, or The Field of the Cloth of Gold*. Colburn paid £500 for the romance.

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can be dropped, and by so doing I shall save four hundred pounds.

“ From all I have heard I believe Mr. Colburn to be the most liberal and gentlemanly man in his profession, and therefore I think it but right, when a business like the present is before us, that he should be informed of my literary prospects, intentions, and wishes.

“ The price I have fixed in my own mind for the present work is five hundred pounds and the same for the next, and I most fully believe that at that price Mr. Colburn will *to a certainty* repay himself and *may be* greatly a gainer. . . .

“ Yours truly,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.

“ P.S.—To publish the work dividing the profits would worry me more than even publishing for myself.”

Richelieu was published in 1829, and naturally dedicated, without actually mentioning the name, to Walter Scott ; and the same year saw the issue of another poem in the Southey vein by James called *Adra, or the Peruvians*, together with a public reprint of *The Ruined City*. James suffered from the usual authorial fevers attendant on book-birth, for on August 7th, 1829, he wrote to Ollier :

“ I take advantage of a friend's departure for London to write to you though I have nothing to say. I have done so much of my new book as I permit myself to do *per diem*, and having nothing

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else to do, my vile *cacoethes scribendi* prompts me to indite this epistle to your manifest trouble and annoyance. One of my visitors lately brought me over about twenty newspapers and also the information that my unfortunate *Adra* had never made her appearance. Incontinent, I fell into one of my accustomed fits of passion, which was greatly increased by finding that in none of the twenty journals was any advertisement or mention whatever of *Richelieu*, which together with the news that about five and twenty people had asked for *Richelieu* and could not get it in England, Scotland, or Ireland, made me write instantly to Mr. Bentley¹ a very flaming letter about printing *Adra*, etc., etc., etc. I had written to Mr. Colburn sometime ago without his doing me the *honor* to answer me, and therefore I write not there again. I have since received an answer from Mr. R. Bentley and all has gone right. But I am most profanely ignorant of all news and therefore will beg you to answer me the following queries if you can.

“Has *Richelieu* been reviewed in *The New Monthly*? Has it ever been advertised? Does the sale proceed as successfully as when I left London? Will you see that its first success does not make Mr. Colburn relax in his efforts in his favor? Will you manage the reviewing of *Adra* and take care that it be sent to and noticed by as many publications as possible? Will you see that the list of persons to whom I desired it to be sent, and which I left in Burlington

¹ Richard Bentley had just become a partner in Colburn's business: they separated in 1832.

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Street, be attended to? Will you let me know whether there be anything in which I can in any way serve or pleasure you. I am sincere, and ever yours,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

Bulwer (Lytton), writing to his wife at this date, notes: “ *Richelieu*, which everybody praises, the author, whom I don't know, sent to me.”

It is now necessary to retrograde a little and note the marriage of G. P. R. James with Frances Thomas, which took place in St. George's Church, Hanover Square, on December 3rd, 1828. His wife was the daughter of Honoratus Leigh Thomas (1769-1846), a London physician, and a member of a family long established in Carnarvonshire. His father lived at Hawarden, and his mother was a sister of John Boydell, the well-known engraver and print-seller. Leigh Thomas was dresser to Hunter at St. George's Hospital, and one of the original members of the Royal College of Surgeons. He also accompanied, as surgeon, Earl Macartney's Embassy to Peking in 1792. There is a curious account of Mrs. G. P. R. James's father in J. F. Clarke's *Autobiographical Recollections of the Medical Profession*:

“ Honoratus Leigh Thomas, councillor, examiner, and twice President of the Royal College of Surgeons¹ . . . was a very poor surgeon, very undecided, and avoided operations, but he was a shrewd practitioner in medical cases . . . and

¹ There is a fine portrait of Leigh Thomas at this College in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the work of James Green.

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had a very extensive practice among the middle classes. He had in early life been a pupil of the celebrated Cruikshank,¹ whom he afterwards assisted in his anatomical demonstrations, and lived with at his house in Leicester Place, Leicester Square. He subsequently married a daughter of Cruikshank, and succeeded his father-in-law as tenant of the house in Leicester Place, in which he practised for nearly half a century. He was courteous and able as an examiner, dignified as President, but he had no genius. . . . He was perfect in the sick-room, cool, attentive, kind. . . . Personally, he was the beau-ideal of a physician. A tall and slender form, slightly bowed; a face sedate and kind; a forehead, though somewhat low, denoting great perceptive power; and a calm, somewhat subdued voice. He dressed truly 'Professionally'—a black dress-coat, waistcoat, and trousers, black silk stockings and pumps; a spotless white cravat encircled his long neck; and a massive chain, with seals and keys, dangled from his watch pocket. . . . He seemed to have a dread of operative procedure, though by no means in his palmy days a bad operator; but he would delay and delay surgical interferences until his patient, tired out, would consult some more decided surgeon. He had a very extensive practice amongst licensed victuallers, and probably attended more members of that craft than any other surgeon of the present century."

¹ William Cumberland Cruikshank (1745-1800), F.R.S., Anatomist. Partner with Hunter in the Windmill Street School.

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His son, Edward Thomas (1813-1886), was an authority on Indian antiquities.

Directly after the marriage, James and his wife took up their residence abroad, renting a very desirable château in France. He writes to William Jerdan on January 10th, 1829, from here, the Château du Buisson-Garembourg, Evreux :

" . . . The weather having become very unpleasant and my wife having felt herself rather unwell in consequence, I determined to seek a house wherein I might pass the winter. After long search I found the present one, from which this letter is dated, and as it offered a thousand conveniences I was tempted to take it, tho' the proprietor would only consent to let it for two years.¹ This, however, will only be my headquarters from which I shall make my various excursions with my usual eccentricity of locomotion. The Pyrenees, Switzerland, Paris, London, are all within the visionary range of my future plans ; the only one of which certain is that which brings me to London in May for a month or six weeks. . . . I want to seduce you to come and see us. All I can promise you as inducement is a knife and fork and something to eat with it, a bottle of Burgundy or Bordeaux and something to drink it out of, a bed, and a hearty welcome. As to beds by the way, they are so small in this part of the world that on

¹ It belonged to M. de Mathis. Thirty years later, in his novel, *Bernard Marsh*, James gave a description of a French château, probably intended for this one he had occupied near Evreux.

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returning to England I shall be fain to tie my left leg every night to the woodwork for fear of losing myself in the labyrinth of a four-post. However, you shall have the largest the house affords, with three dressing-rooms if you like it, and a view over the park into the bargain. The distance is so small that two days will bring you to where we are, and we are not far from Paris, so that we will find you amusement of one kind or another. I understand that the last proprietor used to sit with a telescope at the garret window and try to pitch penny-pieces into the window of Notre Dame : so you see we cannot be far off. Besides, you would have my wife to talk to, and I can assure you she longs to see something of British manufacture, for tho' she likes the French well enough, you know that if ' Coose crease is coote, butter is better.' Give me but notice of your coming, and I will meet you and conduct you in triumph to the *Château de bon espoir*, as the old romances have it. . . . At all events in pity write me . . . a word or two to let me know who is living and who is dead, for I know nothing but that I am

“ Yours ever most truly,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

Another visitor to the *Château du Buisson-Garembourg* was the novelist's father, Dr. Pinkston James ; he was in failing health and died there suddenly, from apoplexy, on July 14th, 1830. This sad event is described in a letter from G. P. R. James to his cousin, Robert

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James¹ ; and it is given here because the details are curiously similar to those which preceded the writer's death just thirty years later :

“ Château du Buisson-Garembourg,
“ Evreux,
“ France.

“ 16th July, 1830.

“ My Dear Robert,

“ I write you a few lines to tell you the melancholy termination of all our hopes respecting my dear father. On my return from England I found him to all appearances considerably stronger, and though two or three days afterwards his legs swelled a little at night we attributed it to the sudden heat of the weather. On Tuesday last he rode out, and sat for two or three hours under the trees, after which he came home and dined moderately, took his tea and remained conversing for a time while I was writing. At about nine I was called to wish him good-night as he was going to bed, and seeing that he appeared weak and tired, I gave him my arm to walk upstairs. At every step he seemed to grow more feeble, and it was with difficulty I got him into his own room. The moment he arrived there he was seized with stupor and vomiting, and at about half-past one expired at the moment the physician was bleeding him. We had immediately applied

¹ Robert Gordon James (1789-1866) was the son of Robert Harcourt James, and a grandson of Dr. Robert James of the Powders. His daughters, the Misses James, for many years conducted a school for girls at Acton, Middlesex, in the old house adjoining the Rectory in Horn Lane.

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leeches to his head and a blister, but we have since discovered by examination that no possible skill could have effected any amelioration, two large vessels having given way.

"I set out for England probably to-morrow week, when of course I shall see you immediately . . .

"Ever yours truly,

"G. P. R. JAMES."

James proceeded to London to settle his father's affairs, and on the journey he and his wife had some exciting experiences, for they arrived in Paris on the very day which witnessed the promulgation of the famous ordinances of Charles X, the fatal step that precipitated the Revolution of 1830. Already on that night the shops were being barricaded, the populace was in a ferment, and soldiers were guarding the streets. The next morning, the memorable July 27th, as the Jameses were breakfasting, an infuriated mob surged past the hotel towards the residences of the King's most obnoxious ministers. James determined to leave Paris at once, and proceeded to the Palais Royal to secure passports, and there he witnessed the conflict between the guards and the mob, when the first shots were fired, and saw a woman and a sentry (if not more persons) killed. James obtained the passports—the last issued before the Revolution, according to the family account. As James and his wife were leaving the city they were accompanied by his aunt, the same who had witnessed all the horrors of the great Revolution of 1793. This aged but

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still intrepid lady was resolved to stop and enter the Louvre now that history was again being made. The Jameses accordingly alighted, and went into the building, but before they had penetrated far they were stopped by the Swiss Guards and turned back. Half an hour later the mob attacked the Louvre and Tuileries, and the Guards were driven out with bloodshed. The Jameses did not succeed in getting all their baggage away ; some was seized and utilised in a barricade, but it was afterwards returned, more or less damaged, to the owners, with a polite note from the Government.

During his stay in England, James divided his time between his old home near Hanover Square and Mitcham Common, and after completing the settlement of his father's affairs, he commenced in earnest his literary life.

CHAPTER III

The Established Novelist: The Thirties

JAMES had now commenced his astonishingly prolific career as a writer, producing three or more books each year. At the Château du Buisson-Garembourg he wrote *Darnley, or the Field of the Cloth of Gold*, and *De L'Orme*, and these two novels, together with *The History of Chivalry*, were published in 1830. In *Darnley*, it is interesting to note, James's famous "solitary horseman" makes his first appearance. *Philip Augustus, or the Brothers in Arms*,¹

¹ *Philip Augustus* was dedicated to Robert Southey, whose works were too highly appraised by James, in the following terms:

"My dear Sir,

"Were this book even a great deal better than an author's partiality for his literary offspring can make me believe, I should still have some hesitation in dedicating it to you, if the fact of your allowing me to do so implied any thing but your own kindness of heart. I think now, on reading it again, as I thought twelve months ago when I wrote it, that it is the best thing I have yet composed; but were it a thousand times better in every respect than any thing I have or ever shall produce, it would still, I am conscious, be very unworthy of your acceptance, and very inferior to what I could wish to offer.

"Notwithstanding all your present fame, I am convinced that future years, by adding hourly to the reputation you have already acquired, will justify my feelings towards

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written in less than seven weeks, and *Bertrand de la Croix, or the Siege of Rhodes*, belong to 1831, and in the spring of this year, their tenancy of the Château having expired, the Jameses returned home, and took up their abode at Maxpoffle, near Melrose. Here James was also near Walter Scott, and the dying master found pleasure in the society of the man he had encouraged to follow in his own footsteps. Lockhart says Sir Walter "was willing to have a few guests, so they were not strangers. Mr. James (the author of *Richelieu*) and his lady, who this season lived at Maxpoffle . . . were welcome additions¹—and frequently so—to his accustomed circle. . . . Sir Walter . . . seemed when in the midst of his family and friends, always tranquil—sometimes cheerful. On one or two occasions he was even gay; particularly, I think, when the weather was so fine as to tempt

your works, and that your writings will be amongst the few—the very few—which each age in dying bequeaths to the thousand ages to come.

"However, it is with no view of giving a borrowed lustre to my book that I distinguish this page by placing in it your name. Regard, esteem, and admiration, are surely sufficient motives for seeking to offer you some tribute, and sufficient apology, though that tribute be very inferior to the wishes of,

"My dear Sir,

"Your very faithful servant,

"G. P. R. JAMES.

"Maxpoffle, near Melrose, Roxburghshire.

"25 May, 1831."

James received £600 from Colburn and Bentley for this work, and the same amount for *De L'Orme*.

¹ See later, page 226.



THE CHÂTEAU DU BUISSON-GAREMBOURG, EVREUX.

The home of G. P. R. JAMES, 1829-1831.

From a picture sent by the Comte de Rostolais.



MAXPOFFLE HOUSE, NEAR MELROSE.

The home of G. P. R. JAMES, 1831-1833.

From a picture sent by Mr. John Boyd.

[Facing page 58.]

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us to dine in the marble-hall at Abbotsford, or at an early hour under the trees at Chiefswood."

Earlier in the same year Sir Walter Scott wrote of James to Mr. James Skene in these terms :

" I beg to introduce a literary man of great merit who might be called James of that ilk, since he is James of James. I have promised him that you will procure him admission to the Museum of Antiquaries. His wife is with him, whose maiden name chances oddly to be Thomas. She is a ladylike person. They have been long abroad. If you show them any petty kindness it will be gratefully felt, and well-bestowed, and I think you will like them."

James was still near Abbotsford when it was the scene of that noble, pathetic passing of the greatest of Scotch romancers on September 21st, 1832 ; and partly in memory of this friendship his first child, born at Maxpoffle in November of this year, was named George Walter James¹ : the child was also the godson of Walter Savage Landor, who was now a close friend of the novelist's. Like his contemporary brother-romancer, Harrison Ainsworth, James had the supreme capacity for friendship, particularly with literary people. His friends were legion, for he possessed the power of making others love him. His was a singularly generous nature, and he was wholly free from professional jealousy. He was always the first to praise the

¹ George Walter James, who married in 1859 Sarah A. Northam, settled in America, where he died in 1887 at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

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work of other authors, and this pleasant trait was the basis of many warm friendships. Allan Cunningham is a case in point. To him James writes from Maxpoffle on June 14th, 1832 :

“ When you were in this country last year, I told you not to forget me ; and you promised that you would not ; yet I doubt not that when you see the signature to this, memory will have much ado to call up the person who writes. Nevertheless I cannot forbear—even at the distance of time which has since elapsed, and the distance of space which intervenes—from telling you how much delighted I have been with your *Maid of Elnar*. I have not seen the whole, but various passages in various reviews have shown me so much surpassing beauty that I do not wait, even till I have been delighted with the whole, to tell you how great has been the pleasure I have felt from a part.

“ I do not know very well how or why, but I have been lately sickening of poetry ; and though once as great a dreamer as ever felt the sweet music of imagination in his heart of hearts, within the last four or five years I have found it all flat, stale, and unprofitable ; and began to fancy myself a devout adorer of dull prose. I thank you, then, for showing me that there is still such a thing as poetry ; and it would not at all surprise me to feel myself—after reading *The Maid of Elnar* through—taking the top of the wave, and going over every poet again from Chaucer to Byron. Can you tell me what it is causes such a strange evolution in tastes ? I declare for the last five years,

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since the Byron mania was upon me, I have looked upon poetry as the most sappy, senseless misapplication of good words that ever the whimsical folly of the universal fool, mankind, devised. A spark or two of the old faggot was rekindled in my heart about six weeks ago by hearing a sonnet of Wordsworth's read aloud ; and that I believe induced me to read the extracts from your book ; and now I am all ablaze. What I like in the various scattered passages of *The Maid of Elnar* would be endless to tell without writing a review ; but there is something throughout the whole which has enchanted me—a mingling of the fine spirit of old chivalry with the sweet home feeling of calm, happy nature that is something newer than even Spencer. As Oliver Cromwell used to say, I would say something—ay verily—but I won't for fear you should think me exaggerating, and therefore I will bid you farewell. It is natural, of course, for me to hate you ; for every author is bound to detest any other person who writes what is good. I would therefore fain pay you that compliment, but your book will not let me ; and I must beg you to believe me,

“ Ever yours most truly,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

During his residence in Scotland James saw a good deal of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd poet. Field tells an amusing story of how, on one occasion, James and a party were out driving, and proposed to stop at Hogg's house and take the poet with them. Before they

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reached the house, they perceived a man fishing in the Yarrow near the high-road. The fisherman, as soon as he noticed a carriage full of people about to alight, gathered up his rod, and started to run in the opposite direction as fast as his legs would carry him. James started in pursuit, and shouted to the flying poet at the top of his voice. But the fugitive never stopped until he reached an elevated spot of ground, when he turned to watch the movements of the invaders of his peace. Recognising James, he laughingly returned his greeting, and said in his broad Scotch, here impossible to render phonetically : " Why, James, my boy, how are you? I took you for some of those rascally tourists who come down upon me in swarms, and eat me out of house and home." His fears removed, Hogg accompanied the party on their excursion, and spent a merry day.

In a further letter to Cunningham, James deals with reviews and reviewers of his own works :

" Maxpoffle, near Melrose.

" 17th May, 1833.

" . . . I never courted a Journalist in my life, and although I know that I have suffered greatly on this account, yet I shall pursue the same plan ; and only by endeavouring to make my works better than they have been, force all honest writers to give them their due share whatever it may be. At the same time, I will endeavour, as far as in me lies, to prevent any such instances of neglect as those of which you complain taking place for the future, especially

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in regard to a paper¹ which deserves so well of the public. Having done so, whatever be the result, the Editor must 'tak his wull o't, as the cat did o' the haggis.' I never reply to criticism unless it be very absurd, which is not likely to be the case with his; so let him 'pour on, I will endure.'

"I trust that the Editor of *The Athenæum* got a copy of *Mary of Burgundy* independent of that sent to you, for I wish it clearly to be understood that I send you my leather and prunella as a man for whom I have a high admiration and esteem, and not at all as a critic. When you get them, review them yourself; let others review, praise, abuse them . . . but still receive them as a mark of regard from me; and be sure that nothing you can say of them will diminish that regard. Whenever I have any one of them for which I wish a little lenity I will write you a note with it and tax your friendship upon the occasion; but still exculpate me in your own generous mind—and plead my exculpation to others—of all intriguing to gain undue celebrity for my works or of dabbling with literary coteries. I give in to my bookseller a list of my friends—amongst whom your name stands high—and I leave all the rest to him. For *The String of Pearls* I was anxious both because it was given to a charity² and because I was afraid the Publisher might lose by it; but this, as far as I can remember, is the

¹ *The Athenæum*.

² James gave the profits, £75, on *The String of Pearls* to the Royal Literary Fund. See William Jerdan's *Autobiography*.

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only book for which I ever asked a review.

"Thanks, however, many thanks, for your critique in *The Athenæum*, which is calculated to do my book much good and is much more favourable than it deserves. Of your light censure I will speak to you when we meet, which I am happy to say will be soon—at least I trust soon. On the twenty-eighth we leave this place for London on our way to Germany and Italy. . . . The country round us is lovely at present. After a cold lingering spring, summer has set in, in all its radiance, and the world has burst at once into green beauty. You cannot fancy how lovely the Cheviots looked yesterday evening, as Mrs. James and I rode over the shoulder of the Eildons. The sky was full of the broken fragments of a past thunderstorm, and the lights and shadows were soft, superb, and dream-like. I know I may rave about beautiful scenery to you without fear or compunction, for *The Maid of Elnar* made me know that you love it as well as,

"My dear Allan, ever yours truly,

"G. P. R. JAMES.

"P.S.—I have not got your last volume, but if it be as good as its predecessors you will have no occasion to whip your genius."

James's works published in 1832 were *The History of Charlemagne*, which he dedicated to his old schoolmaster, William Carmalt of Putney; *Memoirs of Great Commanders*; a novel, *Henry Masterton, or the Adventures of a Young Cavalier*; and *The String of Pearls*, this last

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being a collection of the Eastern tales he wrote as a boy of sixteen or less. In 1833 appeared *Delaware, or The Ruined Family*; and *Mary of Burgundy, or The Revolt of Ghent*. The author's annual output had now attained almost alarming proportions, and he was already beginning to apologise to his friends for this disconcerting fertility. Writing to John Murray (who eventually decided not to publish James's works) he said :

" I write very rapidly, and when I tell you that this often amounts to twenty-four pages in four or five hours, you may perhaps think that such speed is incompatible with care ; but I can assure you I find by experience that when my pen moves thus fluently—before the ideas that flash across my mind have time to escape—the sheets may want correction afterwards, but in point of spirit and interest they are always far more to my satisfaction than when I proceed slowly."

And, in a letter to Allan Cunningham, James gives a quaint account of his symptoms arising from *cacoethes scribendi* at this date.

" Heidelberg.

" 22nd December, 1833.

" . . . I cannot help thinking sometimes what a fuss Nature must have been in when she made you, whether she should turn you out for a poet or a painter ; for though you wedded yourself to immortal verse—no offence to Mrs. Cunningham—yet you must have shown no little penchant for the sister art. Now to gratify your latter taste as well perhaps as the former,

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I wish you would take a tour up the Rhine next year, for it is very beautiful even after the third time of seeing ; and if you would put yourself under my guidance, I would take you to stalk the stags and the roe deer, in the midst of those deep, deep forests, where every now and then we come upon some of the most splendid sights which Nature can feast the eyes of man withal. The foresters, it is true, would take you and I for Odin and his dwarf page ; but I should be content, and you must not grumble at passing for his Godship. I love to ramble amongst these dim woods and old castles, with every tree and stone and tower its legend ; but nevertheless do not suppose that I am going to write anything upon the Rhine or Germany. So many have written upon that theme, and some whom I could name so well, that I look upon the legendary lore of this track as exhausted. The next thing that I write shall, I think, be a pure English story, but I have so many things already written and unpublished—four works!!!!—that I must be in no hurry to fix upon a subject for the next. Why is it that I write too fast for that slow beast the Public ? Is it because I rise earlier ? or because I do it every day and cannot do without it ? There are four and twenty hours in the day, are there not ? Seven for sleep, four for dressing and feeding, four for reading, five for exercise and pleasure, and four for writing. I cannot write less than five pages in an hour, which gives at the above calculation six thousand pages in a year of three hundred days ; and let me tell you, if either you or I were to publish half as much the

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world would cry Hoo! hoo! There is no resource but to write on and smother our executors under dust and manuscripts. And now tell me what you are doing yourself. Are you, as I have heard, about to publish an edition of Burns?¹ Are you writing anything original yourself? And if not, as the lawyers say, why not? You, however, are blessed with a separate employment which will always allow you to say—I have not time. This is not my case and perhaps you wish it were, that my letter might not draw out over any more of the perishable paper.”

The year 1834 was uneventful, and only witnessed the publication of one of the four works mentioned in the above letter as awaiting that consummation. This was *John Marston Hall*,² a sequel to *Henry Masterton*, and inscribed at her request to the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna of Russia. The Jameses were travelling in Italy this year, and it was at Florence,³ in

¹ It duly appeared in 1834.

² Reprinted in 1848 under the title of *The Little Ball o' Fire*.

³ At the Villa Palmieri, which had been the residence of the family of that name from about 1390 to 1795. The name Palmieri originated with a knight who came into Italy with Otto I in the war for the re-establishment of the Holy Roman Empire, about A.D. 800. He was selected, after Otto's victory over Berengarius, to carry round the camp a palm sent by the Pope in token of peace. Hence he obtained the name of Il Palmiere. The last of the Palmieri family in Florence died in 1805. The Villa Palmieri in later years was occupied by the Earl of Crawford, and Queen Victoria stayed there during two springs. See later, page 277.

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September, that their second child, Florence Frances, was born.¹ The year 1835 saw the author's return to London and the publication of *My Aunt Pontypool*,² *The Gipsy*, and *One in a Thousand, or The Days of Henri Quatre* (dedicated by permission to King William IV). To Allan Cunningham he writes from his new address :

“ 1, Lloyd's Place, Blackheath.

“ 10th July, 1835.

“ A thousand thanks for your kind letter and all the kind things it contains. I am glad that you like my friend *The Gipsy*, because your approval is worth much, and though I think it tolerable myself, yet I have attributed a great part of its success to the name. In answer to the question you put, I do not think he was drowned ; but I do not know with certainty. I have told all I do know and farther this deponent sayeth not. I have long been thinking of writing to you to tell you that the name

¹ Florence James married, in 1870, John Williams. She lived in Australia, and eventually settled in America, where she died in 1894. Mrs. Williams was a very able and talented woman, and was well known as a lecturer on literature and its allied subjects.

² *My Aunt Pontypool*, a story laid in London about 1814, was published anonymously. The author stated in the Preface that many little anecdotes and traits in the book would betray his identity to his friends, and he asked them to preserve his secret. The Battle of Waterloo is introduced. See ante page 35. He also said that four characters in the tale were drawn from life, and the rest may have had prototypes. Republished in America as *Aims and Obstacles*, when the name of Lady Pontypool was changed to Lady Malwark.

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of Chaucer appears in the Scroop and Grosvenor roll in the year 1386, but all that I dare say you know. The best sketch of the real events of Chaucer's life is certainly that in Sir H. Nicolas's comments on that roll, Vol. II., page 404, wherein he probably states all that can be learned with certainty of his life and proceedings. . . .

"*The Black Prince* comes on but slowly. So much examination and research is necessary that it is a most laborious and very expensive work. It has already cost me in journeys, transcriptions, books, MSS., etc., many hundred pounds without at all calculating my individual labour, and do you know, my dear Allan, what I expect as my reward? Clear loss; and two or three reviews written by ignorant blockheads upon a subject they do not understand, for the purpose of damning a work which throws some new light upon English History. I am very much out of spirits in regard to historical literature, and though I would willingly devote my time and even my money to elucidate the dark points of our own history, yet encouragement from the public is small and from the Government does not exist, so that I lay down the pen in despair of ever seeing English History anything but what it is—a farrago of falsehoods and hypotheses covered over with the tinsel of specious reasoning from wrong data. And so you tell Lord Melbourne¹ when you see him."

James's work as an historian, however, was destined to receive some recognition from the Government, and it was no doubt this publica-

¹ The Prime Minister.

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tion of *A History of the Life of Edward the Black Prince*, issued in two volumes by Longman in 1836, and dedicated to the Princess Victoria, that brought the author the appointment of Historiographer Royal to William IV; and in this honorary rôle he published several official pamphlets on historical matters. *The Desultory Man*, a collection of James's short stories and poems, also appeared in 1836. In January of this year the family removed to The Cottage, Oxford Road, Great Marlow, where, in June, Mrs. James gave birth to twin-boys, named Courtenay Hunter and Francis Scott.¹ Here, too, James wrote *Attila*, published in 1837 and dedicated to his friend, Walter Savage Landor. The following letter to Allan Cunningham deals with this work:

“ The Cottage, Great Marlow, Bucks.

“ 15th April, 1837.

“ My Dear Allan,

“ Many thanks for your letter and kind words upon *Attila*. . . . I do believe that he is a good fellow, at all events he is very successful in society, and though there are not, as you well know, twenty people in London who know who Attila was, he is as well received, I understand,

¹ Francis died as a child. Courtenay was of an adventurous disposition. He originally was trained for the Bar, and practised in the State of Virginia. He went on a cruise to Labrador, and in 1857 joined Walker's filibustering expedition into Nicaragua. He was next engaged in various railway schemes in Central America. Finally he fought in the American Civil War. He was terribly wounded in the battle at Winchester, and, in result, died in 1864. He married Emma White of Detroit.



G. P. R. JAMES,

At the age of thirty-eight.

From the portrait by Houghton, 1839.

Block by courtesy of Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton.

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as if he had the entrée. Conjectures as to¹³ who Attila was are various in *well informed circles* of the Metropolis, and ever since the book was advertised two principal opinions have prevailed, some people maintaining that He, Attila, was Kettman of the Cossacks and was succeeded by Platoff; others asserting that he was a Lady, first cousin to Boru the Backwoodsman, and the heroine of a romance by Chateaubriand. This may look like a joke, but I can assure you it is a fact, and that out of one hundred people of the highest rank in Europe you will not find five who know who Attila was, setting aside the grovelling animals who, as the Duke of Somerset says, *addict* themselves to Literature.

“I am very sorry to hear you say that these well-informed and enlightened times have not done justice to your romances. I’ll tell you one great fault they have, which is probably that which prevents the world from liking them as much as it should do: they have too much poetry in them, Allan, one and all from *Michael Scott* to *Lord Roldan*.¹ But you must not expect to succeed in all walks of art. You are a lyric poet and a biographer: how can you expect that the critics would ever let you come near romances? No, no; they feel it their bounden duty to smother all such efforts of your genius, and they fulfil that duty with laudable zeal. Did you see how *The Athenæum* attempted to dribble its small beer venom upon *Attila*? If you have not, read that sweet and grammatical article, when you will find that because a man

¹ Published by Macrone in 1836. The book sold very badly.

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has succeeded in one style of writing he cannot succeed in another, and apply the critic's dictum to yourself. One half of this world is made up of idiocy, insanity, humbug, and speculation, and the other half (very nearly) of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

"Yours ever truly,

"G. P. R. JAMES."

James always had a lively hatred of reviewers—and he had some cause, for he often received a sharp cut of the lash¹—and in an earlier letter to Cunningham he expressed his opinion of the tribe in no measured terms :

"The Cottage, Great Marlow, Bucks.

"27th August, 1836.

"My dear Allan,

"Many thanks on both Mrs. James's part and on mine for your present, and on mine double thanks for your letter which I would have answered before had I been able to read even a part of *Lord Roldan*, which was not the case for some days. . . . In the first place, I will not talk to you the usual cant about not caring what reviewers say of you. It is all very fine

¹ For instance, *The Athenæum* said: "The first and most obvious contrivance for the attainment of quantity is, of course, dilution; but this recourse has practically its limit, and Mr. James had reached it long ago. Common-place in its best day, anything more feeble, vapid—*sloppy*, in fact (for we know not how to characterise this writer's style but by some of its own elegancies)—than Mr. James's manner has become, it were difficult to imagine. Every literary grace has been swamped in the spreading marasmus of his style."

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but all very false ; and I despise the man, as you would despise him, who pretends not to feel what actually takes money out or puts money into his pocket, or who is stupid enough to believe that reviews have not more or less that effect. They *do* work harm or good to every book, and harm or good to every author's reputation. But, my dear Allan, there are two ways of dealing with them, and I will tell you what I think of them as a man of the world and one who has both suffered and reaped benefit from them. The first way is to fight on against them, holding them in that utter contempt which all men who know anything beyond the mere surface of literary affairs must do—contempt not of their impotence, because they are potent, but of the mingled folly, flippancy, ignorance, and presumption which characterises almost all of them. This contempt generally brings them round, especially if thereunto be added a severe castigation of the first who lays himself open by entering into particulars, which castigation generally produces a violent reply in the first instance, and truckling subserviency ever after. The next way is to court them might and main, either after having made up your mind to sacrifice all independence to them, or after having triumphed over them completely. The latter always renders them contemptible adulators where they were contemptible assailants before. I say this without in the least wishing you to believe that I neither feel just or unjust criticism. They both affect me now more or less—certainly much more than they used to do. The fact is, I never yet put a book out of my hands without anticipating

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most painfully everything that could be said against it justly—which everything has always comprised ten times more severe censure than ever critic yet ventured to say; but which has always been of the most opposite kind to that which critics have said. The idiocy of our present race of reviewers consists less in blaming the books they ought to praise and praising the books they ought to blame than in selecting everything in the books for praise which ought to be blamed and censuring everything that is worthy of praise. In fact, the error is in not reading nor considering the things of which they pretend to judge, for I do believe, nay I am sure of it as of my own identity, that when the sins of reviewers are laid open at the day of judgment—and heavy is the sin of those who ruin bright hopes, crush fine aspirations, and pluck back genius and virtue in the road to honour and reward—I am sure, I say, that when their sins are revealed it will be found that not ten books have been read throughout by the whole reviewers of England and Scotland (within a quarter of a century) ere they pronounced the opinion which was to raise or cast down the aspirant; and that not one reviewer in a thousand, nor he once in a thousand times, sits down to review a work without having determined what he is to say before he has read the title page.

“As to *Lord Roldan*, I like what I have read much—very much indeed; and I do not scruple to say that there is more vigorous writing, more fine painting, more truth and perception of character, in that part alone than

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would make ten of the novels that are daily praised to the skies in all reviews of Great Britain. There are faults, my friend,—several ; but they are the faults of genius, and should have been treated with reverence accordingly. You are fond of a little touch of superstition ; but you deal with it as no other man does, and few men ever did but Burns. You see at once, at the same moment, both the sublime and the ridiculous of anything superstitious, and so far all would be well—if you kept the perception to yourself ; but the sublime and the ridiculous, however closely allied to each other, are very jealous of each other. To mingle a slight touch of the absurd might be done in *Tam o' Shanter*, but the mixture of sublimity and jest, especially on matters of superstition, is impossible in a lengthened prose composition. The one infallibly destroys the other. Forgive me for saying this much, but depend upon it a laugh is the most powerful means of dissolving any spell, however fearful, and laying the most terrible spirits in the Red Sea at once. You will say this tiresome lecture has been called forth by a small occasion, and that if such be the only fault in the work it may do very well. And so, my dear Allan, I trust it will do, in spite of all the reviewers that ever yet were born. At all events it merits it ; and if you continue to write on as well, and get but a good publisher to push your works vigorously, you will ultimately achieve all your best hopes, and accomplish the best wishes in your favour of

“ Yours ever,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

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It must be confessed that in this letter James betrays that diffuseness and lack of sense of humour which his critics found in his romances. The picture, however, he suggests of the reviewers—obviously future goats—at the Day of Judgment is rich in unconscious humour.

James was a congenital wanderer. He hardly ever lived longer than two years in any particular house, and by the autumn of 1837 he had removed from Marlow to Fair Oak Lodge,¹ Petersfield, which he rented from Sir Charles Paget. Here he wrote *The Robber*, published the following year, and was at the same time engaged upon another serious historical work, *The Life and Times of Louis the Fourteenth*. By an unfortunate mischance, just at this date, he seems to have been in danger of losing his honorary and resonant office of Historiographer Royal, owing to the death of William IV. James addressed the following petition to the Government :

“ Fair Oak Lodge,
“ Petersfield,
“ Hants.

“ 4th November, 1837.

“ My Lord,²

“ A few months previous to the death of his late Majesty, he was pleased to appoint me Historiographer in ordinary for England, into which office I was duly sworn.

“ On the succession of Her Majesty, our present Queen, although I was informed that the

¹ The house which, some twenty-three years later, George Meredith described as Beckley Court in *Evan Harrington*.

² Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister.



FAIR OAK LODGE, NEAR PETERSFIELD, HAMPSHIRE.

The home of G. P. R. JAMES, 1837-1839.

From a picture sent by the late Lord Llangattock.



THE SHRUBBERY, UPPER WALMER, KENT.

The home of G. P. R. JAMES, 1841-1843, and in 1847.

From an old picture in the possession of Mr. Arthur Matthews.

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office did not necessarily lapse on the death of the monarch who conferred it, I applied to Her Majesty through her Lord Chamberlain for her gracious confirmation of the honour her royal uncle had conferred upon me. Many months have now elapsed even since Lord Conyngham did me the honour of writing to inform me that the time had not then arrived for Her Majesty to take into consideration that class of offices, and I am induced in consequence to apply directly to your Lordship, as I understand that your department of the Government embraces such matters. I should have waited longer ere I thus intruded upon your valuable time, but that I am about to publish a new Historical Work of some importance, in the title to which must appear whether I am or am not still Historiographer. If I am to understand by the silence which has been maintained upon the subject that it is Her Majesty's determination to deprive me of the office which her royal uncle conferred, I must bow to her gracious pleasure, and neither my station in society, my fortune, or my views of what is right, require or permit me to say one word to alter such a resolution. Should that determination, however, not have been formed, allow me to submit to your Lordship that to dismiss me from a post to which I was so lately appointed is to cast a stigma of which I am not deserving. If I have ever written any thing that is calculated to injure society ; if I have ever debased my pen to pander to bad appetites of any kind ; if I ever failed to dedicate its efforts to the promotion of truth, virtue, and honour, not only let the

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dismissal be made public but the cause of that stigma be assigned. But if, on the contrary, to have done my best, and that, perhaps, with more reputation than my writings merit, to promote all that is good and noble ; if to have bestowed vast labour, anxious research, valuable time, and many hundreds of pounds—for which I can hope no return—on such works as *The History of Charlemagne* ; *The History of Edward the Black Prince* ; *The History of Chivalry* ; and my *Letters to Lord Brougham on the system of education in the higher German States*—if these circumstances afford any claim to honour or distinction, I think in my case they may stand in the way of an act which I cannot yet make up my mind to believe that Her Majesty's present ministers would advise. I have given up the expectation indeed that a fair share of honours and distinctions—or in fact any share at all—should be bestowed upon literary men in this country, even where a high education, upright conduct, and a fortune not ill-employed, combine with literary reputation ; but I still trust that that which has been given will not be taken away.

“ I have now to apologise, my Lord,—and I feel that an apology is very necessary—for addressing this letter to your private house ; but your kindness and courtesy when, as a result of some conversations between my friend Sir David Brewster and myself, I addressed you on the state of literature in England, have encouraged me to trespass upon you in some manner.

“ I have the honour to be, My Lord,

“ Your Lordship's most obliged servant,
“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

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James was allowed to retain his office, for in his *Life and Times of Louis the Fourteenth*, 1838, the author was described on the title page as "Historiographer in Ordinary to Her Majesty." James received good payment for this work, Bentley giving £1,000 for merely five years' rights.

James found Fair Oak Lodge very conducive to composition, for by 1839 he had completed and published no less than seven works within the course of a year. These comprised four novels—*Charles Tyrrell, or The Bitter Blood* (a modern story describing Hampshire scenery); *The Huguenot, A Tale of the French Protestants*; *Henry of Guise, or the States of Blois*; and *The Gentleman of the Old School*. He also produced *A Brief History of the United States Boundary Question*, compiled from official papers in the author's capacity of Historiographer Royal; a play, *Blanche of Navarre*, dedicated to Talfourd¹; and some tales entitled *A Book of The Passions*, with engravings by A. E. Chalon, Edward Corbould, and others. A second edition of this last book appeared the same year from Galignani's, Paris, and contained two additional tales.

The wandering James was now again on the move, but this time it was not his fault. He relates the cause thus to Alaric A. Watts:

¹ This, no doubt, was the play submitted to Macready, who makes uncomplimentary reference to it in his diary, 1839: "Read two more acts of Mr. James's milk-and-water play." And "Finished the perusal of Mr. James's play and came to an opinion that will shock his anticipations . . . it is not so easy to write a play as a novel."

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“ Fair Oak Lodge,

“ Petersfield,

“ Hants.

“ 9th April, 1839.

“ I write you two lines in the greatest haste that ever man was in to tell you that the death of poor Sir Charles Paget¹ turns me out of my house. This is not of necessity indeed, for I have a lease of it for some time yet unexpired, but Lady Paget sent to ask if I would let her come in again, and I felt not in my heart to refuse the widow under such circumstances. I go before the first of May, but I do sincerely wish that between this and then I may have the pleasure of seeing you here. I think that you will believe me to be a sincere man : a tolerably bitter enemy as long as I think there is cause for enmity, a very pertinacious friend when I do like. From this place we go to London or rather to Brompton, Mrs. James's sister, who is in town for the winter, having lent her her house there for a short time. It is called The Hermitage, and is nearly opposite Trevor Square. . . . I sell all my horses by auction on the 25th, and you could help to bid them up. . . . I am delighted with your parthian shots, which were exquisitely, truly aimed, and though the arrows were not poisoned by your hand, the corruption of the flesh in which they have stuck, depend upon it, will produce gan-

¹ Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Paget (1778-1839), brother of the first Marquis of Anglesey. He married Elizabeth Monck, who died in 1843.

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grene.¹ You were made for a reviewer : only you are honest. How was it else that I escaped even when we did not fully understand each other ?

“ I have told the bookseller to send you a little pamphlet on the American Boundary question. It is merely a brief and unpretending summary of the early history of that bone of contention, only worth your looking into as a saving of time.

“ I am making a little collection of my works in their new edition for Mrs. Watts’s bookcase, and I send *Richelieu* with this. It is odd Bulwer should have published a play under the same title when the third edition of mine had been announced for months. I have not seen his, but I should like to compare the two.”

By July, 1839, James was at Lyme Regis, Dorset, where he saw something of Abraham Hayward, Q.C. and critic, whose translation of *Faust* had been published in 1833. He writes to him :

“ I have this moment returned from Upway, and hasten to assure you that it would give me the highest pleasure to renew an acquaintance for which, notwithstanding its brevity, I derived so much satisfaction. But I was acquainted with you and *Faust* long before, and therefore it was of no new date when we met at Mr. Lockhart’s.”

James was certainly one of the most amiable of men, and he seems to have been—apart from

¹ Probably refers to Watts’s perennial battle of personalities with the staff of *Fraser’s Magazine*. James seems to have been one of the few literary contemporaries who did not quarrel with Watts.

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his dislike of reviewers—entirely free from the “nerves” and irritability that generally accompany the literary temperament. As already indicated, he was never jealous of his brother writers; he was on good terms with them all, and avoided the quarrels which so often embroiled the happy relations of the Dickens set, who had their rendezvous at Ainsworth’s house, Kensal Lodge, in the Harrow Road. James’s preference for residing in the country kept him, of course, from seeing too much of his contemporaries; but his more peaceable nature is established by the fact that in his correspondence he did not abuse his publishers in the manner that Dickens, Ainsworth, Forster, and the others, were wont to do, although his grievances were probably as great. Although hospitable when the occasion needed, James found his chief pleasure in a rural life, surrounded by his family and a vast number of dogs and horses—a trait inherited from his grandfather, Dr. Robert James. Children he was devoted to, and in addition to his own he always delighted in having with him those of his first cousin, Robert Gordon James. The following letter illustrates this phase of his character and his kindness of heart even in small details:

“Lyme Regis,

“29th September, 1839.

“My dear Robert,

“I write you a few lines, in much haste as usual, to tell you about coaches for the dear little girl to come down to us. I have been much puzzled about two things in regard to her coming: First and foremost, I wished to

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send her a little supply to defray expenses of coming down here. This at the present moment, however, I cannot do, for I have adopted the plan of paying every thing weekly, which is inconvenient at present—carrying off all ready money—but will, I trust, tell hereafter. If you can contrive to send her down, then I will send her up again. The next thing that puzzled me was how to get her down without exposing her to a night journey alone, for until lately there has been no *one* day coach. One, however, has been now set up. . . . The coach is called the Herald Exeter Coach, and sets out from the Swan, Lud Lane, booking also at the Spread Eagle and White Horse, Piccadilly. It starts at half-past six in the morning and arrives at quarter to eight in the evening . . . so that she will not have more than half an hour's night travelling. As soon then, my dear Bob, as she can come, let me know on what day she starts, and we will be at Bridport to meet her. Secure her place, however, a day or two previous to starting, for the coach fills well and sometimes there is no room. . . . Fanny and I are going to spend a day or two with Lord and Lady Clinton,¹ and may be absent in the beginning of the week after this ; but I hope Mary will come before that, and then we will install her safely.

“ Your aff.,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

¹ James had dedicated his novel, *The Huguenot*, to Lord Clinton, the nineteenth Baron (1791-1866), who married Lady Elizabeth Kerr. They lived at Heanton, Devonshire.

CHAPTER IV

The Meridian : The Forties

THE next decade was the happiest of James's life. He had won, by the fruits of his pen and his amiable character, a prominent position in the literary profession and hosts of notable friends. He spent his time as he liked best—in pleasant houses with large gardens in the Home Counties, or in travel upon the Continent ; and his unending stream of books kept him well occupied, though the money they brought him in was never husbanded but spent as freely as earned. Whatever the faults and limitations of his works, they were certainly written with a sincerely high aim. As he himself stated, he looked “ more to the benefits to be produced to society by combining amusement with moral instruction than to the mere artistical means of exciting curiosity and maintaining interest . . . that true and faithful representations of society in all ages, that accurate portraiture of character and manners, that the narration of striking events, great actions, and terrible and tragic occurrences, might be combined with all that tends to improve and elevate the human mind, and to purify and ennoble the heart. . . . But other considerations had also to be attended to. To paint human

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nature without vice, would be to deviate so grossly from that reality which can alone render fictitious narrative either interesting or instructive, that the picture would be valueless. . . . But it seemed to me unnecessary to dwell upon the details of evil. . . . I trust that if my works have not tended to improve the tone of society, they have at least impaired no virtuous or honourable principles in any heart, nor advanced the cause of vice. In individual instances, I know they have given comfort in affliction, and support in temptation, and that knowledge is far more satisfactory to their author than all the success they have obtained with the public."

It must again be confessed that James takes himself too seriously here, and—like so many of the Victorian novelists—is obsessed by the importance of the moral influence he imagines he wields. It was the success of Dickens as a romancer-cum-reformer and the arch-abolitionist of abuses that inspired many of his writing contemporaries to mingle with their draught of legitimate fiction the often insipid herb of virtuous propaganda. James, no doubt, realised that he was a disciple of the prevailing literary spirit of his period, for, in a letter to Allan Cunningham, he said :

"It gives me great pleasure to hear you like my books. You are one of those who can understand and appreciate the plan which I have laid down for myself in writing them. If I chose to hazard thoughts and speculations that might do evil, to run a tilt at virtue and honour, to sport with good feelings and to arouse bad ones,

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the field being far wider, the materials more ample, I might perhaps be more brilliant and witty, but I would rather build a Greek temple or a Gothic church than the palace of Versailles with all its flags, statues, and marbles. If the books give you entertainment, you are soon likely to have another, for there is one now in the press called *The King's Highway*, but which is not quite so Jack Sheppardish as the name implies."

This was written from 2, Verulam Place, Hastings, in January, 1840, and the book mentioned, and also *The Man at Arms*, were published later in the year. In July, James went abroad, and at Brussels he saw a good deal of Charles Lever and Sir George Hamilton Seymour, the representative of the British Court in Belgium¹; and the trio had many convivial evenings. Charles Lever was also a physician, and at Brussels was called in to attend to the James children's nurse. He thought she was suffering from inflammatory rheumatism, and intended to resort to bleeding. But, he said afterwards, there was something in the patient's pulse that made him hesitate and decide to wait another day for further developments. These soon came about, and the case proved to be small-pox. There was a great *fracas* in the hotel, the proprietor demanding the invalid's removal to the

¹ Sir George Hamilton Seymour (1797-1880), G.C.B., grandson of the first Marquis of Hertford, was Minister Plenipotentiary at the Belgian Court 1830 to 1846, when he went to Lisbon. He was subsequently at St. Petersburg and Vienna, and retired in 1858. He married, in 1831, Gertrude, daughter of the twenty-first Lord Dacre.

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pest-house ; but G. P. R. James insisted on her remaining where she was and having his personal care, and got his way.

James had dedicated *The Gipsy* to Sir George Hamilton Seymour in 1835, and Lever paid the Minister a similar compliment with *Harry Lorrequer* in 1839.

On Christmas Day, 1840, James was invited by the Seymours to dine : " Will you and your wife come and eat turkey with us ? " The dinner was a very good one, but, after all, there was no turkey. Just at this date there was much excitement, as usual, concerning the Eastern question, and James, the next day, wrote the following pasquinade :

" On the notorious breach of Political Faith committed by Sir G. Hamilton Seymour, Her Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Belgium, on the 25th December, 1840.

" Most perfidious, most base of all living ministers,

You deserve to fall back to the rank of plain misters ;

Your star taken off, and your chain only serving
To fetter your ankles selon your deservng.

Don't think that my charge is some trumpery
matter

Of Court Etiquette : It is greater and fatter ;

Fit cause throughout Europe to spread con-
flagration,

Set king against kaiser, and nation 'gainst
nation.

'Tis a fraud diplomatic—a protocol broken,

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The breach of a treaty both written and spoken,
A matter too bad for e'en Thiers's digestion,
The loss of an empire, the great Eastern question.
In vain would you move my ambition or pity—
In vain would you offer me province or city—
Neither Bordeaux, nor Xeres, nor eke all
Champagne,
Can make me forgetful of promises vain.
Such pitiful make-weights I send to perdition ;
'Twas Turkey you promised—at least a parti-
tion.
'Twas Turkey you promised—you've broken
your word.
'Twas Turkey you promised—and where is the
bird ? ”

Within an hour Seymour sent James this reply :
“ Of Eastern affairs most infernally sick,
No wonder I failed my promise to stick.
With the subject of Turkey officially crammed,
If Turkey I dined on, I swore I'd be damned.
But, at least, my good friend, and the thought
should bring peace,
If I gave you no Turkey, I gave you no Greece.”

James and Lever now became very intimate, and the English novelist was associated with one of the Irishman's best-known novels, owing to an accident which occurred just at this date. *Charles O'Malley* was then appearing in parts, and at the end of Chapter 67 Lever appended a long epistle, dated Brussels, January 18th, 1841, wherein he stated that a fire at the premises of his publisher in Dublin had consumed the remainder of his manuscript, so what

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could be done for the February number? He continued: "It was impossible for us at a moment to re-write our lost pages; and, in our distress, we sought the aid and assistance of our literary friends; among others, the talented author of *Darnley* and *The Gipsy*. He came to our succour with a readiness no less a proof of his friendship than his genius; and, in a story of intense interest and great beauty, has done much to console us. It is now before us; we intend also that it should be before you. . . . Let us now conclude with this assurance, while I forestall the moral of my friend James's beautiful story, and assure you that I feel a fire can be a happy incident; for had not my pages been burnt, I should never have been able to present you with his.

"I am most respectfully and faithfully yours,

"CHARLES O'MALLEY."

Next came two pages of a rhyming letter:

"To G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.,

"*Hôtel de Regence.*

"With a scrap of notepaper, just saved from the flames,

I sit down to write you a line, my dear James,
And explain, if I'm able my spirits to rally,
The misfortune that's happened to poor
Charles O'Malley.

In Ireland, where once they were proud of
their learning,

They've taken, of late years, to roasting and
burning;

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And not satisfied now, with destroying a
parson,
They've given a poor author a touch of their
arson.

.
They left not a character living for me,
Frank Webber and Power and poor Mickey
Free,
And even the 'Dals,' and the Major Monsoon,
They sent up, in fragments, as high as the
moon—
On my conscience, they finished the Irish
Dragoon!
Not a one could escape, nor lie hid in a nook,
The wretches, they even laid hands on 'the
Duke';
And from what I have heard—this between
me and you—
He shone full as bright as at great Waterloo;
And though firemen played, like some journals
we'd name,
They could not extinguish one spark of his
fame,
As when rising on high, and upon earth no
more he
Illumined the land of his birth with his glory.

.
They've burnt my book—not a story nor sally,
Not a love scene, nor fight, now remains of
O'Malley;
Not a battle or bivouac, ever you'll see,
Nor even a chaunt from our friend Mickey
Free.

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So with labouring brain, and with faculties
turning,

I sit trying to find out a cause for this burning :
Was it some scheme of a clique or a closet ? or
Was it the fault of a drowsy compositor ?

Was it some story with which I've been rash
in ?

Or was it some foe to my good friend
McGlashan ?

Was it Otway or Carleton, or was it Sam
Lover ?

Alas, I'm afraid I shall never discover.

I don't think it's true, but it's whispered to me,
That Moore had grown jealous of poor Mickey
Free,

For he sings his own songs—when he's asked
out to tea.

But come over, dear friend, and partake of my
grog,

And suggest what to do for an unlucky dog ;

Who never gives way long to grief and to
sorry care,

For somehow they but ill suit your friend

“HARRY LORREQUER.”

JAMES'S ANSWER.

‘ My dear Lorrequer,

“ When I received your note the sun was
shining as brightly as if it had been summer,
and on the golden background of the evening
sky the thin tracery of the leafless twigs was
finely marked, offering many a beautiful form
and graceful line, though the foliage of a brighter
season had departed. They were like the

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memories of hopes long passed away ; and I could not help thinking, as I read the account of what had befallen you, that you, like those bare branches—though you had lost one crop of leaves in this untimely manner, might very soon produce another as fertile of hope as those which were gone. The news of the burning of the printing house, and the loss it occasioned you, grieved me deeply, but did not surprise me in the least. I have always expected it ; for who would doubt that after you had gone on eating fire so long, fire would some time or another turn round and eat you. Besides, my dear Lorrequer, there is something so very inflammatory in your nature that I wonder any printer would let your sheets within his door. No one ever speaks of you without finding ideas of combustion naturally suggest themselves ; and the wife of a great general, in describing to me, the other day, a visit you had paid her with a worthy gentleman from Scotland, said that it was the strongest contrast she had ever seen, for he burned like a port-fire, while you went off like a sky-rocket. Why, your good and bad qualities all tend to the same effect, and your very books are enough to make a man call a fire-engine. Warm-hearted though you be, you cannot deny that you are as fiery as a box of lucifers, and have been in a flame of one kind or another all your life ; and when we take into consideration your flashy wit, and your blazing style, I cannot but think that the printer who takes in your MS. without warning his neighbours might be indicted for a nuisance. . . . A house on fire is not always so bad a thing as people



CHARLES LEVER.

From "Charles Lever : His Life and Letters," by Edmund Downey.

Block by courtesy of Messrs. Blackwood.

[Facing page 92.]

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think. I recollect a very sweet girl being saved from drowning by a house on fire. . . .

(Here follows the story)

“Such, my dear Lorrequer, is the story; and now let us consider what can be done to remedy the burning of your new number. On my honour, I see nothing for it but to publish the ‘O’Malley Correspondence’ on the subject, with a portrait of the fire-engine and a wood-cut of Fire. Think of it, my dear fellow, and whether you take my advice or not, believe me ever yours,

“G. P. R. JAMES.”

The fire at the publisher’s in Dublin occurred in January, 1841, and Lever, in addition to some chapters of *Charles O’Malley*, lost the manuscript of *A Tyrol Story*, which he never re-wrote. Lever’s first biographer, Fitzpatrick, stated that “Mr. James, who happened to be in Brussels, expressed great sympathy, and advised Lever to write him a letter announcing the fire to which he would reply.” James’s reply included, as indicated above, his original short story, *The Fire*, which was reprinted in *Eva St. Clair, and Other Collected Tales*, 1843.

In the spring of 1841, James returned to England and took up his abode at The Shrubbery, a pleasantly situated house in the picturesque village of Upper Walmer, Kent, some quarter of a mile from the sea.¹ Here, during the next three years, he wrote *Corse de Leon, or The Brigand*

¹ The Princess Amelia, daughter of George II, and Lord Lothian were among the occupants of The Shrubbery in the eighteenth century.

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(dedicated by permission to the King of the Belgians) ; *The Jacquerie* ; *The Ancient Régime* ; *The Life of Richard Cœur de Lion* (the first two volumes) ; *Morley Ernstein*, wherein James laid some scenes at Deal, adjoining Walmer ; *The Commissioner, or De Lunatico Inquirendo*, which was later finely illustrated by Phiz ; *Eva St. Clair and Other Collected Tales* ; *The False Heir* ; *Forest Days*, an excellent romance of Robin Hood and Sherwood ; and *Arrah Neil*.

The well-wooded garden of The Shrubbery led towards Walmer Castle, then occupied, as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, by the great Duke of Wellington, with whom James was on very friendly terms ; Wellington's eldest son, Lord Douro (afterwards second Duke of Wellington), became the author's most intimate friend, and, as will be seen later, played a prominent part in settling the affairs of the family after James's death. There is a curious, inconsequent allusion to James's intimacy with Wellington in W. J. Fitzpatrick's *Life of Charles Lever*, a book which is not too generous to Lever's friends. It is here stated that though Lever liked James, "he rather pooh-poohed the stereotyped 'Two Cavaliers . . . who, of a fine autumnal day, might be seen,' etc." ; and that, owing to a typical Leverian blunder, James was asked by mistake (the letter being intended for the Rev. Edward Johnson) to contribute to *The Dublin University Magazine* and to pay a visit to its editor, Lever, in Ireland. The result was that James sent some contributions and arrived at Temple-Ogue, near Dublin, where Lever was then living, in 1842. Mr. Fitzpatrick and a certain Major

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Dwyer, of the Austrian army, who enacted, none too meticulously, the rôle of Boswell in Lever's life, conjointly relate :

" James's story, which was soon afterwards brought out by McGlashan, was entitled *De Lunatico Inquirendo*, and although many assumed it to be by Lever himself, it proved a considerable failure, in fact *un fiasco colossal*. To the Magazine James gave *Arrah Neil*.¹ McGlashan pruned freely. James abused McGlashan to Lever for having emasculated his jokes. ' Where be they ?—as we used to say in the Catechism,' muttered Lever. He told McGlashan to beware of the ' Lunatico,' who had become dangerous from irritation, but suggested that as James had been dining twice a week with the Duke of Wellington, he had eaten himself into a more than ordinary bilious temper. Lever would sometimes say that he wanted powder for his magazine. ' It is doubtful whether James's contributions,' he said, ' were *James's Powder* at all.' . . ."

This rambling statement requires the comment that its assertions rest entirely on the authority of the writers and are unsupported by any documentary evidence. There is no reason to suppose that Lever had anything to do with James's story *De Lunatico Inquirendo*—even with the Preface—and that novel did *not* appear in *The Dublin University Magazine*. It was published anonymously as *The Commissioner*,

¹ It appeared in *The Dublin University Magazine*, 1843-1844. The subsequent publication of the tale in three volumes, 1845, by Smith, Elder, and Co. confirmed James's association with that firm for a time.

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or *De Lunatico Inquirendo*, by the firm of William Curry, Jun., and Company, Dublin, in 1843; and when it was reviewed, in September of that year, in *The Dublin University Magazine*, the reviewer was quite unaware of the author's identity, for he observed that the style of the tale suggested "bits of Bulwer and James, and Dickens and Hook; and yet every chapter abounded in portions which could not belong to some one or other among them."

It is true that James had some business transactions with McGlashan, the publisher, whom he had met in 1840 at Lever's house in the Quartier Leopold, Brussels, for he writes to McGlashan as follows:

"The Shrubbery, Walmer.

"2nd August, '41.

". . . It will give me very great pleasure to see you here on your way back from Brussels, and we can talk over the whole of my plan, but as to having even one number completed, that is quite out of the question, as in order to accomplish it I should be obliged to lay aside a work which had reached the beginning of the last volume before you made up your mind, and to do so would be highly disadvantageous to both books. I can tell you quite sufficient, however, regarding the first two numbers to answer your views as to illustrations. Pray give my best wishes to Dr. Lever and tell him that we are all going on well, though for the last fortnight I have had no small anxiety upon my shoulders regarding Mrs. James and the baby [The boy Courtenay.]"

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To return to James's visit in 1842 to Lever in Ireland, the afore-quoted Major Dwyer met the novelist at his patron's dinner table, in company with Captain Siborne, the author of a military book, *The Waterloo Campaign*, and Dr. Mortimer O'Sullivan. Lever's Boswell records :

"In the after-dinner conversation on this occasion James took a very decided lead, especially on matters that I should never have expected him to discuss authoritatively, horsemanship and military tactics.¹ James was not horsey-looking ; one would at first sight be inclined to set him down as an exception to the general rule that 'all Britons are born riders,' he looked more like a seaman than a soldier. Why he should have selected two such topics puzzled both Siborne and myself, but I subsequently found that James liked to seize upon and talk categorically about things which other individuals of the company present might be suspected of considering their own peculiar hobbies. However that may be, he entangled Lever in a great equestrian controversy, which proved not a little amusing, for Lever, if not a very correct or elegant, was at least a very bold rider, and could knock as much out of the veriest screw as any man I have ever known. Lever's practical knowledge made him more than a match for James's theory, even although set forth in the most flowery language, and therefore the other subject, military tactics, was started,

¹ The Major of Memoirs seems to have been unaware that James was both an extensive owner and expert rider of horses, and that he had seen something of warfare at, or soon after, the battle of Waterloo,

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Siborne being this time singled out as an antagonist. The Captain, however, not caring to discuss professional matters with a civilian, effected a skilful retreat under cover of such vague generalities as occurred to him at the moment, so James was left to develop his ideas of warfare from his own internal consciousness, and I remember recognising them subsequently in one of his later novels, *Arrah Neil* I think, where a highly scientific imaginary battle is fought in a corner of a field leading to a ford. James, so fond of horseflesh, finished his career as Consul-General at Venice, where the sight of a horse was never seen."

So much for this succinct and omniscient chronicler, whose final *bon-mot* above quoted is an adaptation from Thackeray's note on James in his *Roundabout Paper, On a Lazy, Idle Boy*: "What a strange fate is that which befell the veteran novelist! He was appointed Her Majesty's Consul-General in Venice, the only city in Europe where the famous 'Two Cavaliers' cannot by any possibility be seen riding together."

James offered himself in 1843 as Parliamentary Candidate for his division of Kent. The following letter to Captain Vincent,¹ R.N., of Walmer Beach, concerns this political adventure:

¹ Captain Vincent knew Napoleon well at St. Helena, and rendered him some service, for the Emperor presented Vincent with a ring, bearing the inscription "Emperor Napoleon to Captain Vincent, St. Helena, Dec., 1815." Inside the ring is a lock of Napoleon's hair, and it is decorated with some emblematic scroll work with the devices of roses (for England), thistles (for Scotland), shamrocks (for Ireland), oak leaves and acorns (for the British Navy as represented by Vincent), and bees (for Napoleon himself).

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“ The Shrubby, Walmer.

“ 4th April, 1843.

“ . . . I think it will be necessary to state that you see very great difficulties, since the decision of the Nottingham Committee, in carrying on any election in this borough on account of the impossibility of guarding against what zealous friends may do contrary to the wish of the Candidate or his Committee, and the equal impossibility of getting indifferent voters to go over to Sandwich, six miles distant, without ordinary refreshment. I could enlarge upon these topics and also upon the danger of the opposite party, full of wiles¹ as they are, taking

The gold is diversely alloyed so as to give the roses a red tinge, the leaves a green, and so on. Captain Vincent gave this ring to G. P. R. James, and it is now in the possession of his grand-daughter, Miss Blanche James, of Eau Claire. This was presumably the Captain A. A. Vincent who was Commander of the Naval Yard at Deal, 1830-1832. He was later appointed Rear-Admiral and Gentleman Usher to Queen Adelaide. He died at Walmer in 1862.

¹ James's Whig opponent was named Fox, and this man put a paragraph in the local papers warning the electors against a certain *Gipsey* at Walmer. When James spoke at Sandwich shortly after, he said: “ I accept the title which the gentleman on the other side has given me ; but I would have him know that with the roving habits of the gipsey race I have also inherited the gift of telling fortunes ; and I will venture to tell a piece of his, which is that he will never be member for Sandwich.” Fox and James met again many years later in Venice, when they re-fought their ancient battles in a very amiable spirit. Lord Morley of Blackburn in his *Life of Cobden*, writing of this year, 1843, says: “ At Canterbury, where the cause of protection was advocated oddly enough by G. P. R. James, the renowned novelist, one or two corn-factors insulted Cobden and Mr. Bright, and there was some uplifting of sticks.”

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means to create ground for a petition by acts of their own done apparently in our favour. You might throw in a word or two in regard to my own strong objections, which you well know, to bribery or corrupt treating, and you might say something to show that you and other Conservative gentlemen, who have kindly promised me your support, are still willing to give it, though the result be now rendered uncertain even in my own case, and almost hopeless in the case of any one whom you do not know so well, by this decision of the Nottingham Committee. . . . I received a letter to-day from Charles Wyndham, M.P. . . . He says that the Queen is afraid of walking in the gardens of Buckingham Palace on account of monomaniacs.”¹

At this period also, G. P. R. James was actively engaged in a campaign concerning the faulty laws of copyright, or rather the lack of it, with resulting piracy abroad, which operated so heavily against the interests of literary men in those days. In 1840 he said: “In my plan for stopping continental piracy. . . . I do not despair of succeeding although the Government will do nothing. I have already made some way.” And writing in May, 1842, to J. Bretton, James states:

“I am very glad you were pleased with what I said at the Literary Fund dinner. I could have said a great deal more upon the same subject

¹ Victoria had recently suffered two attempts on her life. In June, 1840, when driving down Constitution Hill, she was fired at twice by Edward Oxford; and at the same place in May, 1842, a man named Francis tried to shoot the Queen.

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and opened my views for the benefit of the arts in this country—including *literature, of course, as one of the branches of art.* . . . I think if I can bring the great body of literary men to act with me, especially the much neglected and highly deserving writers for the daily and weekly press, I shall be enabled to open a new prospect for literature. Should you have any opportunity of hinting that such are my wishes and hopes, pray do so ; for this is no transient idea, but a fixed and long meditated purpose which, however inadequate may be my own powers to carry it out, may produce great things by the aid of more powerful minds than that of

“ Yours very faithfully,
“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

James, however, played a prominent part in framing and establishing the protective clauses which were embodied in the Copyright Act of 1842 and the International Copyright Act of 1844 ; and his friendships with the Dukes of Wellington and Northumberland and many members of the other House proved valuable aids to the passage of the Bills. James dedicated his novel, *The False Heir*, 1843, to those members of the Government who had aided the Bills for suppressing Continental piracy of books, and in the Introduction gave an account of these matters. For several years James could gain no help except from Lord Sydenham ; but in 1842 ministers agreed to consider the question and act. To prove that, though cheap foreign pirated editions were interdicted, prices of genuine editions in England would not be

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raised but rather the reverse, he published *The False Heir* at six shillings—"at a great reduction of price, notwithstanding the strenuous and repeated remonstrances of his worthy publisher" (Bentley). James was thus a pioneer in the production of cheap fiction. Novels at this date were usually sold at £1. 11s. 6d. A public acknowledgment of James's services to his brother authors was paid by Harrison Ainsworth in the Dedicatory Letter prefixed to his own romance of *Saint James's, or the Court of Queen Anne*. It was worded thus :

" Kensal Manor House.

" October 26th, 1844.

" My dear James,

" It gives me sincere pleasure to inscribe this book with your name. Not that I think it worth your acceptance, but that the Dedication will afford me an opportunity of expressing the great regard which, in common with the whole reading world, I regard your many and varied performances.

" The idlest of the race of authors myself, as you are the most industrious, I used to be filled with wonder at your extraordinary fertility of production ; but when I became more intimately acquainted with your energetic character, and unwearied application, and understood better the inexhaustible stores of fancy, experience, and reading you have to draw upon, my surprise gave way to admiration.

" Your brother writers owe you a debt of gratitude, though I fear it has been but imperfectly paid. It is mainly, if not entirely,

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to your influence and exertions, that Continental Piracy has received a check, and that unauthorised foreign reprints of English works have been kept out of the market. May opportunity be given you to do yet more for us.

“One word as to my story. I know not whether my portraiture of Marlborough will please you. Very likely not. If I have painted him too much *en beau*, it is because almost every other writer has shaded his character too deeply ; underrating his brilliant services, and dwelling upon his few failings, rather than upon his many and exalted qualities. While reading some of these ungenerous memoirs, I could not help echoing the indignant exclamation of Frederick the Great—‘What, could not Blenheim, Ramilies, Oudenarde, nor Malplaquet, defend the name of that great man, nor even Victory itself shield him against envy and detraction?’ Happy are you in the friendship of a Hero¹ who has extended the glory of British Arms even further than Marlborough extended it ; whose victories have thrown Blenheim and Ramilies into the shade ; and whose laurels have never been tarnished like those of the Great Commander of Queen Anne’s day.

“The amusement and instruction they have derived from your writings have endeared you to hosts of readers ; but if they were as well aware of your excellent qualities of heart as they are of those of your head ; if they knew the enlarged views you take of human nature ; the rare liberality you exhibit towards your contemporaries ; and the kindly sympathies you

¹ The Duke of Wellington.

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entertain for all, they would estimate you as highly as

“ Your sincere friend,

“ W. HARRISON AINSWORTH.”

Two years earlier James had contributed a tale entitled *The Fight of the Fiddlers* to his friend's new venture, *Ainsworth's Magazine*; and in 1845 James's longer novel, *Beauchamp*, appeared as a serial in *The New Monthly Magazine*, also the property of Ainsworth, followed by *Margaret Graham* in 1847.

Towards the close of 1843 James moved from The Shrubbery to a house, a mile or so distant, called The Oaks, close to Upper Deal Church and within easy reach of the beautiful stretch of down-land and cornfields crowned by the picturesque village churches of Mongeham and Ripple. Here he wrote *Agincourt*, *Arabella Stuart*, *Rose D'Albret*—all three published in 1844—*The Smuggler* (1845), and *The Stepmother* (1845-1846).

In 1844 commenced the issue of the collected and revised edition of James's Romances, published at the outset by Smith and Elder. The first of the series was *The Gipsy*, and the author wrote a long autobiographical Preface. Herein he gave some interesting details of his method of prolific literary composition. He stated:

“ All the materials for the tales I have written, and for many more than I ever shall write, were collected long before the idea of entering upon a literary career ever crossed my mind. . . . I am an early riser¹; and any one

¹ 5 a.m. at this period. S.M.E.

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who has that habit must know that it is a grand secret for getting through twice as much as lazier men can perform. Again, I write and read during some portion of every day, except when travelling, and even then if possible. . . . Then, again, the habit of dictating instead of writing with my own hand, which I first attempted at the suggestion of Sir Walter Scott, relieves me of the manual labour which many authors have to undergo, leaves the mind clear and free to act, and affords facilities inconceivable to those who have not tried, or, having tried, have not been able to attain it. I think all these circumstances may account for my being able to produce more than many others, without the works themselves being either better or worse on that account. However that may be, the public, which judges for itself, has judged favourably of my productions ; its encouragement has led me on ; I do not find that its favour has abandoned me, or that its patience is worn out ; and to that absolute Prince Public (not Prince Posterity), I appeal with the confidence which lenity and kindness are sure to inspire."

The sale of this collected edition of James's works was furthered, in the provinces, by the method of house to house canvassers. In the course of a long letter to his publishers or agents the author said :

" I am happy to find that you have had so many respondents to the advertisement. I was quite sure that plenty of persons would be found to undertake the task. . . . I find that twenty-five per cent. for canvassers who deliver is full remuneration. . . . The address and

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appearance of the canvasser must be a matter of consideration with you ; and a gentleman who does the best to persuade you to take him, is very likely to be the one who will do the best to persuade others to take the book. . . . To get the names of the parties ordering the book before delivery, written by themselves in the subscription book, is necessary, as authenticating the order, especially when it extends to the whole series ; but this is generally done with ease by the canvassers making it a point of pride to have a collection of respectable or distinguished autographs in their books. . . . It will be necessary not to let the canvassers know that I have anything to do with the system or the undertaking, as if mentioned to the persons applied to, it would injure rather than improve the sale."

The plan was certainly a peculiar one for an established author of repute who, as he acknowledged in the preface just quoted, had no cause to complain of popular support. But James, whatever sums he received from his books, never saved any money, and the great fortune of his grandfather seems to have vanished in a most unaccountable, unexplained manner. So short of ready cash always was James, even in these halcyon days in Kent, that he used to settle the accounts of his medical attendant, Dr. Davey, of Walmer, in kind by means of oil paintings and other property.¹ For various

¹ Some of these pictures, once the property of G. P. R. James, are now in the possession of Dr. Davey's grandchildren, the family of the late Rev. Canon Bruce Payne, Vicar of St. George's Church, Deal, who married Miss Davey.

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reasons, therefore, James found it advisable to leave England for a time, and the family arrived on the Continent in the summer of 1845. James stayed for a week, in July, at Bonn with his old friend, Charles Lever, and in the autumn they both took up their abode at Carlsruhe. The two men had much in common. Both shared an inveterate monetary instability which made continental sojourns convenient, and both had a passion for keeping a good table and a great number of horses on a nebulous credit banking account. At this petty Versailles of Baden, Carlsruhe, the two novelists created rather a sensation—they “were the cynosure of all eyes”¹—and the eccentric Lever, in particular, amazed the sober denizens of the little town by “riding at full speed through the streets of Carlsruhe, with his children, and sometimes even Mrs. Lever, attired in very conspicuous habiliments, with long flowing curly locks of auburn, so that the people at first took him for a circus proprietor.” Lever’s earlier biographer, W. J. Fitzpatrick, states that the Irish novelist and James had for society “a little *corps diplomatique* of pleasant folk and their wives, with whom they lived on easy terms of familiar intercourse; meeting every evening somewhere and dining occasionally at the Grand Duke’s court. . . . There were neither beauties nor geniuses to make their wives jealous or themselves uneasy; and G. P. R. James and he had a very comfortable time of it, the game all their own. The royal dinners took place

¹ *Charles Lever: His Life and Letters*, by Edmund Downey, 1905.

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at two, with lots of Grashen whist in the evening."

But the two improvident novelists before long found it desirable to move on elsewhere ; Lever to a castle in the Tyrol—the Rieder Schloss. Although the surrounding scenery was very beautiful, James wrote to Mrs. Lever expressing regret that Lever "is likely to go to that detestable place, Bregenz. Spring, autumn, and winter, it is surrounded by frightful swamps which only dry up in summer to exhale most noxious vapours. You will all die of malaria ; but I do hope he will not take the *château*, which is likely to prove as pleasant a one as some of the gnomes' castles in the fairy tales." James went to Baden. Their friendship continued warmly to the end. James dedicated his next novel, *The Stepmother*, 1846, to Lever ; and Lever returned the compliment by inscribing his *Roland Cashel*, 1849, to James—"a Roland for your Oliver, or rather for your Stepmother," as the witty Irishman pleasantly put it. James described Lever as "One of the most genial spirits I ever met ; his conversation is like summer lightning—brilliant, sparkling, but harmless. In his wildest sallies I never heard him give utterance to an unkind thought."

At Baden, in October, 1846, was born Charles Leigh James,¹ the novelist's youngest child. James announced the new arrival in an amusing letter to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Leigh Thomas,

¹ Charles Leigh James, who married Maria Charlotte Hoyt in 1873, by whom he had three daughters, died at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, U.S.A., in 1911.



G. P. R. JAMES,
At the age of forty-five.

From a portrait taken in Baden, 1846.

Block by courtesy of Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton.

[Facing page 108.]

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resident at Bryn Elwy, near St. Asaph, in Wales :

“ Baden-Baden.

“ 25th October, 1846.

“ My dear Sophy,

“ A great fat boy! If you are near any iron mines, pray send me over some, for he has got the appetite of an ostrich ; and the first thing he did on coming into the world was to roar for a hot supper. To be serious, however, the day before yesterday, with much less warning than one gives to housemaids, the young gentleman was told to quit his place, and in about three quarters of an hour after had got another. . . . He has no mustaches, and was not born either with a pipe in his mouth or a bottle of beer in his hand, which is extraordinary considering the country which he has chosen for his début. I have been too busy doing bad English into worse German and bad German into good English, between the accoucheuse and our nurses, to write to any one before to-night, and am too busy in the same classical pursuits to indite a long letter. . . .

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

The influence of James's sojourn in Germany was apparent in his next two books, *Heidelberg*, 1846, and *The Castle of Ehrenstein : its Lords Spiritual and Temporal ; its Inhabitants Earthly and Unearthly*, 1847. This latter book deals ostensibly with the supernatural, and as an historical romance of the old-fashioned type is, in the opinion of the present writer, James's

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best work—always excepting the inartistic final chapter. The first few chapters appeared as a serial in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, 1845, illustrated by very powerful drawings by Phiz. For some unexplained reason the romance was discontinued here, and the plates were not reproduced in the three volume edition, published by Smith, Elder, 1847. Six chapters also appeared in 1845 in a weekly publication called *The Novel Times*.

The Castle of Ehrenstein belongs to the school of *The Castle of Otranto* and the romances of "Monk" Lewis and Mrs. Radcliffe, and, indeed, exceeds all of these in descriptive power and horrific incident; but unfortunately, as Mrs. Radcliffe did in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, James, in his last chapter, clears up all his mysteries, and the ghostly phenomena are accounted for by human agency. We treat the supernatural more seriously and considerately in romance in these days; and so did Harrison Ainsworth in James's time, and that is one reason why the author of *The Tower of London* and *The Lancashire Witches* survives in a literary sense and is read by a generation which scarcely knows the name of G. P. R. James. Still, the ghostly vaults and halls of *The Castle of Ehrenstein*, and the picturesque descriptions of storms and the romantic Rhine scenery and its vivid legends—such as that of the Wild Huntsman—make excellent reading, and for those who wish to essay James for the first time this particular book is best adapted for the purpose.

In 1847 the Jameses were back in England and once more domiciled at Walmer in the same

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house they had occupied three or four years earlier. From there the author writes :

“ The Shrubbery, Walmer, Kent.

“ 1st June, 1847.

“ My dear Worthington,

“ I received your letter yesterday and would have answered it immediately ; but we are in the midst of an election business here. I am not a candidate ; and, disgusted with public men, had resolved not to take any part on behalf of others ; but I have been led on, and when once in the business go on, as you know, heart and hand.

“ Let me hear a little more about the Ecclesiastical History Society. I am a churchman, you know, but far from Puseyitical, and I should not like to be mixed up with any legends except such as Ehrenstein or any saints except St. Mary la bonne.

“ I am glad to hear that you have moved your dwelling ; for Pancras was so completely out of my beat that it was impossible for me to get there when in town. Indeed, during my visits to that famed city of London I always feel myself in mind of an American orator's description of himself when he said, ‘ I am a right-down regler steam engine ; I go slick off right ahead and never stop till I get to the tarnation back of nothing at all.’

“ I shall be delighted to see you and Mr. Christmas here any time you can come, and will with a great deal of pleasure board and educate you, but as to lodging you I am unable, for what with babies, nurses, and one

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thing or another, I can hardly lodge myself. . . .

"As to Marylebone, anybody may propose me for anywhere, and I will be the representative of any body of men, always provided, nevertheless, that I do not spend a penny and maintain my own principles to the end of the chapter. I am not yet inscribable in the *Dictionnaire des Girouettes*; but I trust soon to be, for it seems to me that the Jim Crow system is the only one that succeeds in England.

"Believe me, with best regards to all your household,

"Yours truly,

"G. P. R. JAMES."

In this year James again published an amazing number of books. Despite his earlier assertion (in the General Preface to his works) that his literary fecundity was exaggerated and that his average production was a romance in every nine months, the fact remains that 1847 alone, in addition to *The Castle of Ehrenstein*, witnessed the publication of *Russell, a Tale of the Reign of Charles II*; *The Convict*; *A Whim and its Consequences*; and *The Life of Henry the Fourth of France*, all these being works of three volumes each. In 1848 he produced *Gowrie, or the King's Plot*; *Camaralzaman: a Fairy Drama*; *Margaret Graham, a Tale Founded on Facts*; *The Last of the Fairies* (charmingly illustrated by John Gilbert); and *Sir Theodore Broughton*, a novel founded upon the murder of Sir Theodosius Boughton by John Donellan, in Warwickshire, in 1781; and he

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republished in book form, from magazines, *Beauchamp* and *The Fight of the Fiddlers* (dated 1849).

In the Preface to *Camaralzaman* James dealt humorously with his alleged over-production of books. This particular one, he said, was written "more to fill up pleasantly some vacant hours than to win renown. There are excellent folk amongst the public who will not believe this and will ask, reasonably enough, 'How can Mr. James have vacant hours when he writes so much? Has he not published this very year, etc., etc., etc.?' . . . I have some leisure in the day. Not that I mean to say there is exact verity in a wonderfully amusing account of my habits published some years ago in France, where the author declares 'Après midi il se livre aux plaisirs de chasse avec ses amis,' for I certainly neither hunt nor shoot every day of the year. I wish I could. . . . but still there are times and seasons when the law prevents our seeking field-sports, and the weather gives us a hint to stay at home. It was at such moments . . . that the following pages were written, when I found that playing at chess bored me—especially when I was beaten—and when the *cacoethes scribendi*, which has become chronic, was strong upon me."

Early in this year, James, ever restless and roving, removed to Willey House, near Farnham, in Surrey. He was getting poorer and poorer from this migratory life, but remained as hospitable as in more prosperous days. These facts and his perennial hatred of reviewers are evident in the following letters:

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“ Willey House, near Farnham,
“ Surrey.

“ 26th July, 1848.

“ My dear Ollier,

“ I do not suppose that I shall be in town for a few days, and I think in the meantime it would be better to send me down the sheets¹ with any observations you may have to make. I shall be very happy to cut, carve, alter and amend to the best of my ability. The ‘sum’ can only be described as ‘Heaven, Hell, and Earth,’ or if you like it better, ‘upstairs, downstairs, in my lady’s chamber.’ But I suppose neither of these descriptions would be very attractive, and therefore perhaps you had better put ‘The Sky, the Hall of Eblis, South Asia.’ When it maketh its appearance you had better for your own sake take care of the reviewing; for I cannot help thinking that with the critics, at least, my name attached to it is likely to do more harm than good, unless friendly hands undertake the reviewing. The literary world always puts me in mind of the account which naturalists give of the birds called Ruffs and Reeves, which alight in great bodies upon high downs, and then each bird forms a little circle in which he runs round and round. As long as each continues this healthful exercise on the spot he has first chosen, all goes on quietly; but the moment any one ventures out of his circle, all the rest fall upon him; and very often a general battle ensues. I wish you could do anything for my book, *Gowrie, or the King’s Plot*. I had a good deal of money embarked in it.”

¹ Of *Camaralzaman*, which Charles Ollier published.

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James had a great set-to with *The Examiner* over that paper's review of *Gowrie*, which accused the author of only superficially reading up one history on this affair of the Ruthven brothers. In result and reply, James issued a lengthy pamphlet entitled, *An Investigation of the Circumstances attending the Murder of John Earl of Gowrie and Alexander Ruthven, By order of King James the Sixth of Scotland, With an examination of the forged Restalrig Letters brought forward to exculpate the King*. In this work James reprinted the report of the Inquest upon the Ruthven brothers and produced further evidence to support his belief of the guilt of James the Sixth.

“ Willey House, near Farnham,
“ Surrey.

“ October 4th, 1848.

“ My dear Ollier,

“ I have not seen *The Court Journal* upon *Gowrie*. The truth is I am so poor this year that I have been obliged to curtail all my papers but one. I am writing a complete refutation of *The Examiner*, the editor of which paper refuses to put in my last letter, I suppose because the proofs of Sprott's forgeries were too strong for him. I only wait to get Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*, from which I have only at present some rough notes taken long ago. As soon as I get the work so as to give you chapter and verse I will publish the whole correspondence, and will send your friend a copy.

“ I have never anything to do with the sending presentation copies of my works to reviews :

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but I am very sorry the publishers have not sent them to *The Court Journal*, as I imagine is the case from your letter. This shall be amended. In the meantime I will replace the *Gowrie* you have given away, and will bring up with me a copy of *Beauchamp* for the editor when I come to London to-morrow. I have two copies by extraordinary bounty. I have read *Beauchamp* again myself, and have been much amused with it, having forgotten every word of it before I opened the paper. There is a sad tale connected with the writing of that work which might well explain my forgetfulness of the contents. Let me have a few copies of *Camaralzaman* if possible before publication."

William Jerdan he invites to Willey House in December, 1848 :

" Whenever you can come I shall be delighted to see you. On Tuesday morning I am in London and dine out, but after that there is no other engagement except a cattle show dinner on Thursday to which I can take you if you are a judge *bovis*. Everything in the shape of well-aired bed, etc., will be ready for you whenever you come and a hearty welcome—alas, all I have to give."

And here is a more jocular note :

" Willey House, near Farnham,
" Surrey.

" 17th April, 1849.

" My dear Davison,

" I understand you have got a potato. Can you spare half of it, for we have not that ? But

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to speak seriously, which is not my wont, Mrs. James has heard from Mrs. Hig that on your farm there are some capital praties, and as we have been languishing for some of the jewels for the last month without being able to get any thing edible or digestive, if this rumour of your *richness* is correct will you spare a sack or two to a poor man in want, and what will be the cost of the same, delivered in Farnham safe, sound, and in good condition—wind and weather permitting? The truth is I have no horse to send for them, and neither cow nor calf have learned to draw yet. I have had no time to teach them, or to buy a horse either. I wish any one else had half my work and I half of theirs. I'd take it and give a premium.

“I hope your sister got back safe to-day without being wet to the skin. Indeed, it would need to be a gutta percha skirt which would keep out the weather we have had. She was most resolute in refusing cloak, mantles, and mackintoshes; so if she be hereafter laid up with rheumatic fever or influenza, or any other of the ills that flesh is heir to, remember it is not the fault of

“Yours truly,

“G. P. R. JAMES.”

Wiley House was the last English home of James, the last place where he was able to lead the life he liked best with his family and dogs. Here, too, were his last opportunities for entertaining friends. Lord Douro was a frequent visitor from Strathfieldsaye; and on one occasion he wished to bring Count

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D'Orsay to Willey House, but James, with rather an excess of virtue, refused to receive Lady Blessington's *beau cavalier* in the house that held his own wife and daughter. His son, Charles James, relates that Lord Douro "came to us . . . and talked to my father about it rather angrily, but got as good as he gave!"¹ James also had an amusing *fracas* in Surrey with a neighbouring M.F.H. The novelist's eldest son, Walter, a boy of seventeen, in the ecstasy of his first gun had shot a fox. The Master of the pack threatened to horsewhip the offender, whose father retaliated by saying that if he did, he—G. P. R. James—would shoot the M.F.H. By an amusing move of Fate, very shortly after, a fox took refuge in the garden of Willey House, where the "kill" took place. The infuriated Master, on the horns of a dilemma, would not enter the grounds, for he must either carry out his threat to horsewhip Walter James and run the risk of violence from, or a duel with, the boy's father, or do nothing and be considered a coward: so he rode off, whilst the rest of the hunt stayed to enjoy the hospitality of the author of *The Man at Arms* and *Revenge*!

James's last year in England was, as usual, prolific in literature. He published a modern tale called *The Forgery, or Best Intentions*; he wrote another, *The Old Oak Chest*, which appeared in 1850; to a work entitled *Seven Tales by Seven Authors* he contributed the one named *Norfolk and Hereford*, in addition to aiding with his advice and assistance Frank Smedley, who projected and edited the book in question as a

¹ MS. *Autobiography of Charles Leigh James.*

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means of helping a literary lady—a friend also of James's—then in monetary difficulties. James also compiled and edited various other works, such as *John Jones's Tales* (from English History) and *Dark Scenes of History*. His vogue, however, was passing, and a brother novelist in similar plight wrote to him at this time :

“ November 14th, 1849.

“ My dear James,

“ Anything I can do for you at any time you know you may command, and I shall only be too happy in the opportunity of making kindly mention in *The New Monthly Magazine* of your *Dark Scenes of History*. The times are not propitious to us veterans, and literature generally has within the last two years suffered a tremendous depreciation. . . .

“ Do you know, I took it into my head you were the author of *Jane Eyre*, but I have altered my opinion since I read a portion of *Shirley*.¹ Currer Bell, whoever he or she may be, has certainly got some of your ‘trick,’ and I began to think you were coming upon us in fresh and more questionable shape. But *Shirley* has again perplexed me.²

“ I hope when next in town you will come and dine with me. It will really delight me to see you. . . .

“ Ever cordially yours,

“ W. HARRISON AINSWORTH.”

¹ *Shirley* had been published in the previous month, October, 1849.

² Sydney Dobell, the poet, was convinced about this date that Currer Bell was the one and only author of *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

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During his last years in England James took an active part in political affairs and was particularly engaged against Free Trade. Willey House was the centre of local activities, and James foolishly spent the last remnant of his fortune in this unprofitable cause. Added to this came overwhelming misfortunes in connection with his books. As he wrote whimsically to a friend in June, 1849:

"Their quiet history has been subjected to revolutions as manifold though not as great as those of France. The publication was removed from Messrs. Smith and Elder because under their excellent management the more I sold the more I lost.¹ A gentleman of not the most direct mind and character then purchased a

¹ Sir Sidney Lee, in his memoir of George Smith (*Dictionary of National Biography*), gives a different version of James's parting with this firm of publishers. He says that at the time Smith, Elder published the collected edition (eleven volumes, 1844-1847) of James's works they contracted "to publish every new novel that he should write; £600 was to be paid for the first edition of 1,250 copies. The arrangement lasted for four years, and then sank beneath its own weight. The firm issued two novels by James in each of the years 1845, 1846, 1847 [four were issued in 1847], and no less than three [two] in 1848. Each work was in three volumes at the customary price of 31s. 6d.; so that between 1845 and 1848 Smith offered the public twenty-seven [thirty] volumes from James's pen. . . . James's fertility was clearly greater than the public approved. The publisher requested him to set limits to his annual output. He indignantly declined, but Smith persisted with success in his objections to the novelist's interpretation of the original agreement, and author and publisher parted company. . . ."

James generally received £500 for each of his works published by Richard Bentley in the early forties.

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quarter share of the copyright and put the whole proceeds into his own pockets, though under an improved system those proceeds were considerable. I was obliged to repurchase his share and then place the Works in the hands of Simpkin and Marshall."

Shortly after, owing to the financial difficulties of the publishers, James was sued by the engraver who had been engaged to furnish plates for a uniform edition of his works, and the unfortunate author was mulcted to the extent of several thousand pounds. This was the final blow to James's finances, and, his patrimony being now almost non-existent, emigration seemed to be the best expedient, for the novelist had three sons, and he thought it wiser to cast their future in a new country. He left England against the advice of his friends, in particular that of the Duke of Northumberland. According to the flowery Maunsell B. Field, the Duke offered James a blank cheque, telling him to fill in the amount that would relieve him from his embarrassments and so enable him to remain in England: "Mr. James firmly, but with an overflowing heart, refused to accept anything, even in the form of a loan." And so, at the age of forty-eight, the happy English years of G. P. R. James came to an end, and he set forth upon his penultimate adventure, an adventure more doubtful and precarious in prospect than any of the wanderings abroad which, from his teens, had entered into the life of the romantic novelist. He and his family sailed for America.

CHAPTER V

America : New York and Massachusetts Days

THE James family arrived in New York harbour—"after a very calm but somewhat dangerous passage (of fourteen days)—dangerous on account of fog and ice," the novelist told Ollier—on July 4th, 1850, and were welcomed by all the stunning uproar and explosions that attend the national celebration of Independence Day. The party stayed first at the old New York Hotel. Mr. Henry James, in his most interesting early autobiography, *A Small Boy and Others* (1913), has recorded how the New York Hotel was a social centre in those days. Mr. Henry James was not related apparently to the earlier novelist of the name, for he stated to the present writer :

"I enjoy no traceable relationship to G. P. R. James. . . . Our name, as you know, is a considerably frequent one, and apparently of Welsh, and Welsh-Irish origin ; so that branches and sets of Jameses exist who are without consanguinity. My *paternal great-grandfather* was of Irish birth, and he turned up in America (State of New York) but toward the end of the eighteenth century. We had, as a family, no

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contact with G. P. R. during his time in the U.S., and this in spite of the fact that my father, there, was a constant reader of his novels—one or other of which was generally in view.”

One, however, may pleasantly surmise that possibly Mr. Henry James, as a small boy of seven, came to the New York Hotel to see his Albany cousins (as he so often did) just at the date in 1850 when G. P. R. James was there, and that the two, unknown to each other, may have met.

G. P. R. James, now at Astor House, proceeded to present his letters of introduction. These included one to Horace Greeley, the journalist and founder of *The New York Tribune*, who, James said, had “the head of a Socrates and the face of a baby.” It was at this time that James became acquainted with Maunsell B. Field, afore quoted, who relates he saw the novelist “almost daily.” Possibly this fact may be taken in correlation with the same memoirist’s next statement, that “Mr. James soon found a residence in a hotel incompatible with the prosecution of any literary labour. So many people constantly called upon him that he had no command of his own time. Accordingly he desired to find a place, a little out of town if possible, where he could be comparatively free from intrusion.” Mr. Field belonged to that order of kind friends who are “trying.” For instance, he introduced to James “a gentleman of wealth and of the best social standing in New York,” who hastened to inform the novelist that he was a great admirer of his works, that he believed he had read them all, and that there

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was one in particular which was his especial favourite. "And which is that?" asked James. "*The Last Days of Pompeii*," was the answer. "That is Bulwer's, not mine," replied the mortified novelist,¹ who never forgave the man, as Mr. Field complacently observes before passing on to another pleasing incident at poor James's expense, which he narrated thus: "A lady, spending her summer in the country, was thrown upon the not very extensive resources of a village circulating library for books. She was one day pleased to find there, and took home with her, a copy of an English edition of one of James's novels in two volumes. She read them through with delight, and only after finishing discovered that she had been perusing the first volume of one work and the second volume of another. Nothing but our great intimacy could excuse me for telling this to James, but he winced under it." No doubt, and probably prayed "Save me from my friends."

The suburban domicile to which James retreated was at the alarmingly named Hell Gate, opposite Astoria. The house had originally belonged to John Jacob Astor, and it was from his grandson, Charles Astor Bristed, that the

¹ Mr. Hugh Walpole has related recently a similar experience in America. He met a magnificent lady with an insignificant little man, presumably her husband. The lady highly praised Mr. Walpole's books, asserted how much they meant to her, and vowed she would go on reading them every day of her life. Finally, she said that *Sonia* was her favourite. Mr. Walpole replied it was a fine book, but the author was Mr. McKenna. The lady collapsed, and the hitherto silent and insignificant little man with her cried in a rasping voice, "Stung again, Isabella!"

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novelist rented it. The place was only partially furnished, for summer residence, and James wrote an amusing account of the discomforts and difficulties attending the move in a rhyming letter to Field :

THE JOURNEY TO HELL GATE

Dear Field, I will give you a picture in verse
Of disasters it grieved my steel-pen to rehearse,
As trotting fast on the high-road to the devil,
All cookless and manless with coachman uncivil,
We set out by some strange arrangement of
Fate,
To make our abode just outside of Hell Gate.

But first let me show you the course of the
packing,
The cramming, the jamming, the racking, the
cracking ;
With boxes too few to contain all our store,
And each minute bringing some thingumbob
more ;
While Walter,¹ and Courtenay,¹ and Florence,¹
and I,
To put gallons in pint-pots laboriously try ;
And Charlie¹ himself must have finger in pie.

The scene was the parlour, the whole was
dramatic,
And wanting in naught but a little salt attic :
In her own quiet chamber, hard by, *Stabat*
Mater,
And first of the histrions, *loquitur Pater*.

¹ James's children.

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G. P. R. : " Come bustle, come bustle, come
bundle the traps,
Come pack up the bonnets and poke
in the caps!
The porters are damning,
The doors are all slamming,
Portmanteaux are cramming ;
Come, fill up the gaps! "

C. : " Oh, dear me! oh, dear!
How marvellous queer!
Here's *Whipple's Oration* got in the
slop-pail! "

G. P. R. : " Leave it there,
And don't stare,
It will very well fare.¹
One half the world's verse,
More than half of its prose
Is slop, and at last to the slop-pail
it goes."

F. : " Here are *Everett's Speeches*—oh,
where shall they go? "

G. P. R. : " On Fame's highest platform, where
clouds are below,
And sunshine above them, and
clearness around,
And flowers few, but lovely, be-
spangle the ground.
But I'm thinking of tropes, when I
should think of locks,
For Cicero, printed, must go in the
box :

¹ Perhaps this was a retort to E. P. Whipple's uncomplimentary criticism of James in *Essays and Reviews* :
" For the last ten years he has been repeating his own repetitions and echoing his own echoes."

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Put him in beside Sumner——”

F. : “ They’ll never agree.”

G. P. R. : “ Jam them tight,
They can’t fight,
At least for one night,
However opposed to each other they
be.”

W. : “ Here are Irving and Lowell and
Hawthorne and Holmes,
And Bryant and Tuckerman, too ;
And hundreds of vagrant poetical
tomes—

Oh, dearie me! what shall I do? ”

G. P. R. : “ Put Irving and Addison close side
by side,
And Goldsmith as near as may be ;
Three such kindred spirits may well
take a ride

E’en were it to E—ternity.

’Tis but to Hell Gate,

And the fiat of Fate

Has decreed that they should not
go in :

For the Devil himself,

Though a covetous elf,

Would not suffer such spirits within.

The English poet would preach
peace

To damned souls longing for release ;

The Irishman would teach sim-
plicity

To knaves condemned for earth’s
duplicity ;

The tears and smiles at Irving’s
voice

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Would deck the face of hard remorse,
Till, all forgetful of the curse,
Hell's tenants would themselves rejoice,
And Rip Van Winkle's solemn souls
With laughter cheer their game at bowls.

Put them in! Put them in!
'Tis a travelling sin
To waste time in packing a box to a pin.

If the binding is hurt,
'Tis but the bard's shirt;
He himself will be found
All immortal and sound
Whatever may happen to damage his skin."

C. : "Here's Mr. Thackeray."

G. P. R. : "He rhymes to quackery."

W. : "Here's Charlie Dickens,
And his whole brood of chickens."

F. : "Here are Hallam and Hunt
And Johnson and Blunt,
And a score or two more
Lying round on the floor."

G. P. R. : "Cram them in! Cram them in!
'Tis a travelling sin
To waste time in packing a box to a pin."

W. : "Here are papers,
And tapers,
And rapiers,
And capers,
And things from the drapers."

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- C. : " Here are pistols,
And crystals,
And rifles,
And trifles,
And holsters,
And bolsters,
And beds made of osier,
And things from the hosier,
And boxes of furs,
To say nothing of curs
And poor little Frizzy."¹
- G. P. R. : " You make my head dizzy.
Cram them in! Cram them in!
'Tis a travelling sin
To waste time in packing a box to
a pin."
- W. : " They're all in at last! "
- C. : " Don't get on so fast!
Here are lucifer matches,
And a box for dispatches."
- F. : " And a pair of nail-nippers,
And an old pair of slippers
That came from Morocco,
And lots of rococo."
- G. P. R. : " All presents from friends I shall
never see more
Till the journey of life, like this
journey, is o'er;
But their gifts still to fancy shall
call back their faces,

¹ A highly accomplished spaniel, the only member of poor James's menagerie in England that accompanied him into exile. "Frizzy" died the following year at Stockbridge, Mass., and Charles Leigh James relates: "I saw my father having him buried with due state at the foot of a tree."

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And yield to dead present the past's
living graces.

Oh! put them by safe, for an hour
oft may come

When I long for some sight to re-
mind me of home—

Of that home o'er the waters, where
hope's early sight

First presented the world all re-
splendent and bright ;

Where memories crowd, and the
flowers of past years

Blossomed forth in life's morn to be
watered by tears :

Like the lily that opens its breast for
one day,

And closes forever at evening's last
ray.

The dear ones around us the present
may cheer,

But we cannot forget there are
others as dear.

Kind friends may be near us—
bright skies overhead—

But we still must remember the
land of our dead ;

And though this new world my dead
ashes may share,

One half of my heart is, at least,
buried there.

On, on with your work——”

W. : “ It is done.”

C. : “ Oh! what fun!

We shall get there ere nightfall, as
sure as a gun.”

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G. P. R. : " But the cart's breaking down with
the weight of the packages."

W. : " Ere 'tis home there will be a rare
number of crackages."

G. P. R. : " And the wine's left behind, t'other
end of the city :

We must temperate dine——"

C. : " Dear me, what a pity! "

G. P. R. : " Well, you get into the carriage and
go,

And I will run off to the stores down
below ;

Of barrels and bottles make speedy
purveyance,

And follow you fast in some other
conveyance."

'Tis all done—

They are gone,

Wife, daughter, and sons,

Cart, carriage, and boxes, beds,
bolsters, and guns ;

While, like seaweed on some oyster-
bed thrown,

I am left on the pave of New York
alone.

(Ye end of ye First Fytte.)

It was Field, probably, who introduced James to Longfellow, then living at Cambridge, Massachusetts, for the poet, in recording in his Journal his visitors on September 17th, 1850, mentions " Field, with G. P. R. James, the novelist, and his son. He is a sturdy man, fluent and rapid, and looking quite capable of fifty more novels."

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Longfellow evidently liked James, for in a later entry, November 17th, in the Journal he says : " James, the novelist, came out to dinner with Sumner.¹ He is a manly, middle-aged man, *tirant sur le grison*, as Lafontaine has it, with a gray mustache ; very frank, off-hand, and agreeable. In politics he is a Tory, and very conservative."

James's first few months in America were busy and eventful. He was engaged as a lecturer in Boston, New York, and other centres ; he was writing *Henry Smeaton* (1850-1851) ; and he was arranging for the publication of his works in America by the Harpers. It is with these matters that his next letters deal, and they incidentally supply some interesting comments on the America of those days.

" Jamaica, Long Island, N.Y.

" 8th October, 1850.

" My dear Sir,

" I intend to be in New Haven early next week, and have nearly made up my mind to place my eldest son at college, and my second at school,² in that city, which has charmed me much.

" I shall commence my lectures the same week I arrive, and must trust to their quality and the intelligence of the people of New Haven to supply me with an audience. Knowing that you have taken much trouble on former occa-

¹ Charles Sumner (1811-1870), the American statesman and advocate for the abolition of slavery.

² Walter and Courtenay James were now eighteen and fourteen years old respectively.

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sions of this kind, I cannot, even to secure myself success, ask you to repeat similar exertions on behalf of a mere stranger. But I should esteem it a high honour if you would take the chair at only the first lecture. Your time is too valuable to be further intruded upon. My own character and the reception which my lectures met with from the citizens of Boston may, I think, be your guarantee that nothing objectionable is likely to proceed from the lips of

“ Your faithful servant,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

“ New York, U.S.

“ 24th October, 1850.

“ My dear Ollier,

“ . . . Send no more sheets to Mr. Law till you hear from me again. My eyes have been opened since my arrival here. Four times the sum now paid can be obtained from Messrs. Harper, and negotiations are going on with them in which they must not have the advantage of having the sheets. You shall not lose by any new arrangement, of that you may trust to the word of one who has, I think, never failed you. . . . I have been shamefully imposed upon by false statements of the sales here, and if I had taken his (Mr. Newby's) advice I should have been some hundreds of pounds richer.”

“ New Haven, Connecticut,

“ United States.

“ 27th October, 1850.

“ My dear Ollier,

“ I wrote you a note a few days ago, begging

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you to stop the sending of proofs or early sheets to Mr. Law, the agent of Messrs. Harper, the publishers of New York. I now write to take off the embargo, and ask you to send the early sheets on as rapidly as possible. . . .

"The case is this. I found that Messrs. Harper, while professing to pay me the highest price for early sheets which they paid to any one, were in reality giving me £50 when they gave another better bargainer £150. Some time after my arrival one of them incautiously let me see their sale book, and I found that upon an average my works had a sale of seven thousand more than those of any other author,¹ and

¹There is interesting confirmation of this statement in Eyre Crowe's *With Thackeray in America*: "The next emporium of the book trade in New York is Messrs. Harpers, where we penetrated into the inner or business sanctum and . . . had leisure to scan the shrewd features of Mr. James Harper, then chief director of this great publishing house. . . . Presently a little girl came in, and was formally introduced by her father to Thackeray. He shook hands with her, and, smiling, said, 'So this is a *pirate's daughter*, is it?'—an appellation which tickled the enterprising publisher's sense of humour into an approving grin. Thackeray ventured to ask him whose name stood foremost in popularity in book sales in the United States. He good-naturedly took down a ponderous ledger, turned up the leaves at letter J, and said 'George Payne Rainsford James heads the list, far ahead of any other author, as you can judge for yourself by glancing at the number of his books sold. He turns out a novel every six months, and the success is always the same and tremendous.' This was an 'eye-opener,' to use a trans-Atlantic phrase. When asked to explain the reason of this immense hold upon the public the reply was prompt: 'The main reason is that his romances can always be safely placed upon the family table, with the certainty that no page will sully, or call the blush to, the cheek of any member of the household.'

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I demanded an augmentation of price. They made a desperate resistance and endeavoured to protract the negotiation while they were receiving the proofs from you, hoping doubtless to get the work so nearly completed that they could, in the absence of copyright, set me at defiance. The knowledge, however, that I had written to England actually to stop the proofs soon brought them to their senses, and I have instantly had a letter agreeing to give a thousand dollars—or two hundred pounds instead of fifty. . . .¹

“ I am now for a time at New Haven, the seat of Yale College, one of the most famous in the United States, giving my lectures on Civilisation for the second time in this country. I first delivered them at Boston ; but I went when all lecture-going people were out of town and Jenny Lind was in town. There is no singing against nightingales, and the consequence was that I lost rather than gained. Here, however, the matter is reversed. The great Brewster Hall is well filled every night of the lectures, which I am now speaking instead of reading—I never could read, you know—and I Well was he named in former days by Thackeray ‘ that teeming parent of romance.’ ”

The competition to secure the publication of James's works in America was very keen, and piracy involved actual theft. It is related in *The House of Harper* that their premises were broken into early one morning, in June, 1842, by thieves seeking a copy of James's *Morley Ernstein*, which the Harpers were about to publish in New York. The predatory would-be publishers of the story set fire to the Harpers' bindery in the course of their raid.

¹ Some three years later, James assured the Harpers that they had always treated him admirably in their mutual business transactions. See page 189.

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have professors and students and the whole town for an audience. Applications for the lectures are pouring in from all places, and I shall have as much or more to do in this way than I can accomplish for the next three months. In the meanwhile I am working away at a new romance, for which I must ask the favour of your kind superintendence through the press as on other occasions. When I shall get to Canada I cannot tell, for these lectures now promise to be too productive to be neglected.

“ This is a very wonderful country, and no Englishman that I know of has done justice to it : nor, indeed, do the Americans do justice to it themselves. We all think that in point of polish and the accumulation of conveniences, and even of the conventionalities which grow gradually upon old lands, this country, two centuries and a half old, ought to be upon a par with the others where civilisation has been going on with a steady progress for more than treble its period ; and we are disappointed when we find any small particular deficient. We go to see a new building and are surprised that we do not find Westminster Abbey. Then we go and abuse it—not for what it is but for what it is not. But, my dear Ollier, in passing through this land, one sees no poverty, no squalid wretchedness, no hovels with windows stopped with rags and old hats. Great good humour, too, is visible everywhere amongst the people : each man seems to feel that by industry he can get on as well as another, and each is willing to help another. There is little of that jealous rivalry, none of that irritable envy that we see

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in older lands where we are all struggling for a portion of that bread which is not sufficient for the whole. There is undoubtedly an eager craving for money. It is not only the whole land that is making its way upwards, but every individual in it. Each man is encouraged by a probable hope of fortune, and each man seeks it with eagerness ; but every one holds out his hand to the one lower than himself on the ladder and tries to help him up too. The carping at small faults and petty annoyances which many of our countrymen have displayed and the overlooking great advantages and even great virtues shows no philosophical spirit. The things I mention are on the surface—open to every eye ; no poverty except amongst Irish immigrants ; general good humour and good will¹;

¹ These characteristics of life in the old New York of that date are noted by Mr. Henry James in his autobiography, *A Small Boy and Others*.

The evidence of the two Jameses is interesting, as it expresses the direct opposite to Dickens's point of view of America. Only eight years previous to G. P. R. James's remarks, Dickens wrote to Macready : " I cannot change my secret opinion of this country, its follies, vices, grievous disappointments. . . . I believe the heaviest blow ever dealt at Liberty's head will be dealt by this nation in the ultimate failure of its example to the earth. . . . I love and honour very many of the people here, but the mass . . . are miserably dependent in great things and miserably independent in small ones. . . . The nation is a body without a head, and the arms and legs are occupied in quarrelling with the trunk and each other and exchanging bruises at random."

Macready himself, when he visited America the following year, expressed fairly favourable views of America ; but after his subsequent visit in 1848-1849 he exceeded Dickens in his vituperation of Americans as a whole : his outlook,

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a wide diffusion of education ; a certainty of industry producing competence, and of industry and talent acquiring fortune. Had you been in America you would probably have been President of the United States instead of seeing all your best exertions fruitless, your genius neglected, and every effort frustrated by circumstances. One great advantage of this country is that here circumstances are comparatively powerless : that they cannot exercise such an influence upon a man's fate as in Europe : that it is more in his own hands. Doubtless there is much that I object to ; doubtless there is much which may and will be improved ; but, depend upon it, this is a great and extraordinary country, and England must not sit still contented if she would not be pushed from her stool. . . .

" From this place I am going to Boston again, having three places in that neighbourhood where I have been invited to lecture with the guarantee of a large audience. Nevertheless, address me still New York, for I return to that city to lecture there and in Brooklyn very soon. . . . I have only time and space to say good-bye with best regards from all the household of

" Yours ever,

" G. P. R. JAMES."

however, was hopelessly prejudiced owing to his conflict with Edwin Forrest, the American actor, which culminated in the amazing riot in and outside the New York theatre during Macready's performance, when about twenty persons were killed by the military.

Thackeray, also, was impressed favourably by American life and conditions at the time James writes. See Thackeray's letter to A. Fonblanque, dated 4th March, 1853, from Richmond, Virginia, in *Letters of Anne Thackeray Ritchie*.

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The following letter refers to James's story, *Revenge*, which earlier bore the title of *A Story Without a Name*.

" Tontine Hotel, New Haven, Conn.

" 27th October, 1850.

" I fear that it would be quite impossible for me to rewrite the first four numbers of the tale you speak of. Applications for lectures have come in so rapidly that I have not one single evening vacant, and the evening would be the only time which I could devote to such a purpose, as all my mornings must be given up to the fulfilment of my engagements with England and to travelling from place to place. You may easily imagine how much I am occupied when I tell you that during the whole month I am about to stay in Boston there is not one night which has not its lecture fixed there or at some place in the neighbourhood. . . .

" In regard to the name, it is certainly curious that *No Name* should have been taken three times,¹ but I do not see how it is possible for one to alter it here when it is announced in London. I was not at all aware that any work had before appeared under a similar title ; but you could head it *James's Story Without a Name* in the Magazine,² but if any other title is given it must be by yourselves and not by

" Yours faithfully,

" G. P. R. JAMES."

¹ Wilkie Collins's novel makes a fourth, but his *No Name* did not appear until 1862.

² *Revenge* was issued in book form in 1852. See page 291.

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Donald G. Mitchell, in *English Lands, Letters, and Kings*, gives a good idea of G. P. R. James's personal appearance at this date: "I caught sight of this great necromancer of 'miniver furs' and mantua-making chivalry . . . in the City of New York—a well-preserved man, of scarce fifty years, stout, erect, grey-haired, and with countenance blooming with mild uses of mild English ale—kindly, unctuous—showing no signs of deep thoughtfulness or of harassing toil—a staunch, honest, amiable, well-dressed Englishman—that was all."

James, at first, seems to have taken an active part in the literary life of New York. He was one of the speakers at a dinner in December, 1850, in aid of a printers' charity, when he paid a tribute to Bayard Taylor, the author and traveller, describing him "as the best landscape painter in words that I have ever known." And in February, 1852, James spoke at the meeting in the Metropolitan Hall called for the purpose of raising a memorial statue to J. Fenimore Cooper, who had died the previous year. James's speech is reported to have been extempore; he expressed his pride in being an Englishman, a romance writer, and a man of the people, and his pleasure in paying a humble tribute to an American romance writer and a man of the people: Cooper was not merely a novelist—he represented truth, genius, and patriotism combined. James was always ready to praise warmly other authors, in contradistinction to his vivid dislike of reviewers. This latter foible peeps forth again in the next letter, addressed to the Rev. Francis Kilvert,

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of Laycock Vicarage, Wiltshire, a gentleman who had composed a laudatory Latin inscription to James, and sent it to the author with this note : " I have been so much and so long your debtor for a fund of instruction and delight, that I cannot resist the inclination to acknowledge (not to discharge) the debt in the best and only manner I am able. Accept, therefore, the enclosed Inscription, which I wish did more justice to the many high qualities which characterise your works. I do not apologise for the freedom of this address, because the almost daily habit of deriving recreation, in the intervals of a laborious, wearing profession, from your writings has caused a feeling of acquaintance which hardly allows me to look upon you as a stranger."

To these compliments James replied :

" Stockbridge, Massachusetts,

" United States.

" 15th June, 1851.

" Dear Sir,

" . . . Your letter reached me only two days ago, after various wanderings as erratic as my own have lately been. It does me good, however, to find that I am not altogether forgotten in my native land, and that those whose opinion I most value still regard my efforts with favour and approbation. I fear that less kindly critics will hardly admit the plea you so gracefully put in, to defend the number of my sins of commission in a literary way. But to tell you the truth, I laugh at all unkindly critics ; and laugh with some contempt at the poor people when they are driven to assume, against all literary

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history, that a man's books must be bad because they are many. I am neither Shakespeare, nor Vega,¹ nor, I thank God, Voltaire; but the critics of whom I speak might as well make their much writing a charge against those authors as against me. Perhaps some few of the things I have written may last: I think they will; but, at all events, I am like the man who bought a thousand tickets in the lottery: I have many chances of the prize.

"I am very much struck and surprised with what I have as yet seen of this country. Its state, its progress, its prospects, are little known or understood in England. We laugh at a few glaring absurdities and declaim against a few very striking errors; but we are far from appreciating properly the resources of the land or the energies of the people. The institutions here are, to my mind, anything but perfect, and I believe them to be the source of numerous evils; but, amidst this chaos of democracy, principles of great value and importance are slowly evolving themselves, and there are virtues beneath the surface of society which must ever render a great part of the American people dear to

"Yours faithfully and obliged,

"G. P. R. JAMES."

In addition to liking the American people, James delighted in the beauty of the States

¹ The most prolific of Spanish writers, Lope Vega Carpio, is computed to have had over twenty-one millions of his lines printed; and of his fifteen hundred plays he himself relates one hundred were written in as many days.

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scenery. He had by this date removed to Massachusetts, where he hired furnished a house at Stockbridge belonging to the Ashburner family. It was a pleasant residence, with spacious verandas, and commanded fine views of wild country once the haunt of the aboriginal Indians. The novelist's son describes it thus. "The house stood high on the steep side of a hill . . . a good garden and orchard were laid out along the hillside. . . . Beyond the garden, to east, lay meadows at whose corner, perhaps a quarter of a mile away, opened a gorge known as the Ice Glen where the snow was reputed perpetual. The entrance to this Valley of the Shadow was beautiful—a forest of kalmias, with their huge waxen flowers and glossy leaves, mixed with red sumach and mountain ash : but, as if to impress me properly with the perils of forbidden ground, great boulders were also piled there. . . . Beyond this gorge another mountain, picturesquely barren, . . . and through the intervening valley fell a brook, euphoniously called the Kickapoop (with sundry variations, a common Indian name). Southward from the Kickapoop, a country road led to the farm my father had bought. West of the road opposite us was Monument Mountain, of which Hawthorne's readers say something to each other. The Kickapoop fell into the beautiful Housatonic. . . . Such was the Happy Valley of my childhood. But what pen can paint the blue peaks fading into and out of the ambient sky? These are the first mountains I remember to have seen ; and to my apprehension there was no other

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place in the world which could rival the super-terrestrial beauty of Stockbridge, nor have I seen one since. There is this in favour of my enthusiasm that my relatives seemed equally impressed. The tone in which they—my father especially—spoke about sights abroad generally seemed to me a trifle depreciatory, but he had never seen anything like the Berkshire hills of Massachusetts in their autumnal robes of gold and scarlet. I remember his painting the landscape as seen from one of our windows. The picture was to go to England. . . . My father's farm included a portion of the Negro Swamp, at foot of Monument Mountain, where a tradition said that in days when slavery existed there a nigger had been drowned. The swamp had always a weird sort of appearance to me."¹

At Stockbridge James tried to keep up English customs. He had open grates and log fires in his sitting-rooms, and at Christmas time performed in the traditional rôle of Santa Claus with his children's stockings; but, as his son amusingly observes, "though the sceptical theory of Santa Claus, and the blasphemous design of keeping awake to see who it really was that filled the stockings, did not occur to me until long after this, I did remark that in my room, with the dormer windows, where the stockings hung, there was only a stove-pipe, and I sometimes wondered how Santa Claus got down that—he might be little, but surely his pack of toys would stick."

Stockbridge, in James's time, was the centre of a very pleasant cultured society which the

¹ *MS. Autobiography of Charles L. James.*



WILLEY HOUSE, FARNHAM, SURREY.
The last English home of G. P. R. JAMES, 1848-1850.



HOUSE AT STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS,
occupied by G. P. R. JAMES, 1851-1852.

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novelist much appreciated and enjoyed. The Sedgwicks were the leading family in the village ; Mrs. Susan Sedgwick (daughter-in-law of the former Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States) occupied the Manor House ; Mrs. Henry Sedgwick was also living in Stockbridge ; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sedgwick and their daughter Catherine, the authoress, were at Lenox, five miles distant, where they were frequently visited by Mrs. Pierce Butler (Fanny Kemble), who herself purchased a house in the neighbourhood later on. Oliver Wendell Holmes had a summer-cottage near Pittsfield ; Herman Melville (author of *Typee*, *Omoo*, and other stories of adventure) was in the same district ; Cyrus Field, of Atlantic cable fame, and David Dudley Field, the lawyer, were frequently at Stockbridge in the intervals of their busy careers ; the Rev. Orville Dewey, the well-known lecturer, had at this date retired to the paternal farm at Sheffield, south of Stockbridge ; Felix Darley, the artist and illustrator of Washington Irving's works, was often at Lenox ; and, last but not greatest, Nathaniel Hawthorne, with his family, occupied a country retreat not far from Lenox and situated near a circular lake called the Bowl—"the old red house near Tanglewood Avenue." *Tanglewood Tales* and *The Wonder Book* picture, of course, the surrounding scenery of Berkshire, and in the latter work Hawthorne makes mention of his neighbour, G. P. R. James :

" ' For my part, I wish I had Pegasus here at this moment,' said the student. ' I would mount him forthwith and gallop about the

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country, within a circumference of a few miles, making literary calls on my brother-authors. Dr. Dewey would be within my reach, at the foot of Taconic. In Stockbridge, yonder, is Mr. James, conspicuous to all the world on his mountain-pile of history and romance. Long-fellow, I believe, is not yet at the Ox-bow, else the winged horse would neigh at the sight of him. But, here in Lenox, I should find our most truthful novelist. . . ."

It is interesting to know that when Hawthorne borrowed the name of Pyncheon for use in *The House of the Seven Gables*—with some subsequent trouble to himself—there was a live Rev. Thomas Pynchon, minister of St. Paul's Church, Stockbridge. It was during Mr. Pynchon's incumbency that James attended the church, and he subscribed one hundred and forty dollars to the clock which was erected in the new tower of the building. This church, however, was pulled down some thirty years later, when a larger structure was built.

Hawthorne personally liked James very much, and in his Journal there are full descriptions of their meetings. On July 30th, 1851, Hawthorne says :

"We walked to the village for the mail, and on our way back we met a wagon in which sat Mr. G. P. R. James, his wife and daughter, who had just left their cards at our house. Here ensued a talk, quite pleasant and friendly. He is certainly an excellent man ; and his wife is a plain, good, friendly, kind-hearted woman, and his daughter a nice girl. Mr. James spoke of *The House of the Seven Gables* and of *Twice*

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Told Tales, and then branched off upon English literature generally."

Ten days later James turned up again, unintentionally, and owing to the size of his party was not so favourably regarded by Hawthorne, who, in the absence of Mrs. Hawthorne, had to do the entertaining alone :

"August 9th, 1851. The rain was pouring down, and from all the hill-sides mists were steaming up, and Monument Mountain seemed to be enveloped as if in the smoke of a great battle. During one of the heaviest showers of the day there was a succession of thundering knocks at the front door. On opening it, there was a young man on the door-step, and a carriage at the gate, and Mr. James thrusting his head out of the carriage window, and beseeching shelter from the storm! So here was an invasion. Mr. and Mrs. James, their eldest son, their daughter, their little son Charles, their maid-servant and their coachman—not that the coachman came in ; and as for the maid, she stayed in the hall. Dear me! Where was Phœbe in this time of need? All taken aback as I was, I made the best of it. Julian helped me somewhat, but not much. Little Charley is a few months younger than he,¹ and between them they at least furnished subject for remark. Mrs. James, luckily, happened to be very much afraid of thunder and lightning ; and as these were loud and sharp, she might be considered *hors de combat*. The son, who seemed to be about twenty, and the daughter, of seventeen or

¹ Julian Hawthorne and Charles James were both born in 1846, and so were about five years old at this meeting.

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eighteen, took the part of saying nothing, which I suppose is the English fashion as regards such striplings. So Mr. James was the only one to whom it was necessary to talk, and we got along tolerably well. He said that this was his birthday, and that he was keeping it by a pleasure excursion, and that therefore the rain was a matter of course. We talked of periodicals, English and American, and of the Puritans, about whom we agreed pretty well in our opinions; and Mr. James told how he had recently been thrown out of his wagon, and how the horse ran away with Mrs. James; and we talked about green lizards and red ones. And Mr. James told Julian how, when he was a child, he had twelve owls at the same time; and, at another time, a raven, who used to steal silver spoons and money. He also mentioned a squirrel, and several other pets; and Julian laughed most obstreperously. As to little Charles, he was much interested with Bunny (who had been returned to us from the Tappans, somewhat the worse for wear), and likewise with the rocking-horse, which luckily happened to be in the sitting-room. He examined the horse most critically, and finally got upon his back, but did not show himself quite as good a rider as Julian. Our old boy hardly said a word. Finally, the shower passed over, and the invaders passed away; and I do hope that on the next occasion of the kind my wife will be there to see."

This extract is an intimate revelation of Hawthorne's character. It shows both his



COURTENAY HUNTER JAMES,
second son of G. P. R. JAMES.

From a daguerreotype.



CHARLES LEIGH JAMES,
at the age of twelve.

Youngest son of G. P. R. JAMES.

From a daguerreotype, 1858, New York.

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devotion to his little son, Julian, and his nervousness in entertaining a few visitors. Maunsell B. Field lays stress on this shyness and relates: "One day James and I started to call upon Hawthorne. As we approached his dwelling, we saw him in the vegetable garden at the side of it. As soon as he noticed our approach, he concealed himself, like a frightened school-boy, behind the house, and when we asked for him at the door, we were told that he was not at home."

Charles James well recollected in later years this visit in the storm, and the rocking-horse mentioned by Hawthorne. He wrote: "I remember not only getting upon Julian's rocking-horse, but pulling out his tail and being aghast at what I had done, for I did not possess a wooden horse, and it had not occurred to me that the tail was movable." Perhaps this outrage upon the caudal appendage of Julian Hawthorne's equine property lingered as a grievance in that boy's mind and unconsciously established a prejudice against the whole James family; for, many years after, Mr. Julian Hawthorne, in giving *his* version of the apparently historic visit of the Jameses in the thunder-storm, speaks of them with a supercilious tone quite absent from his father's account. Mr. Julian Hawthorne thus writes of the incident¹:

"James . . . was a commonplace, meritorious person, with much blameless and intelligent conversation; but the only thing that recalls him personally to my memory is the fact of his being associated with a furious thunder-

¹ *Hawthorne and his Circle*, pp. 33-34.

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storm. My father and I were alone in the house at the time ; my mother had gone to West Newton on a three weeks' visit. In the midst of the thunder and lightning, the downpour and the hurricane, the crash of matter and the wreck of worlds, our door burst open, and behold! of all persons in the world—to be heralded by such circumstances—G. P. R. James! Not he only, but close upon his heels his entire family, numerous, orthodox, admirable, and infinitely undesirable to two secluded gentlemen without a wife and mother to help them out. But it was a choice between murder and hospitality, and come in they must. . . . They dripped on the carpet, they were conventional and courteous ; we made conversation between us,¹ but whenever the thunder rolled, Mrs. James became ghastly pale. . . . He conciliated me by anecdotes of a pet magpie, or raven, who stole spoons. At last the thunder-storm and the G. P. R. Jameses passed off together."

The two families evidently saw more of each other, judging by the following letter :

" May 18, 1852.

" Dear Mr. Hawthorne,

" I write you a few lines, in case I should not find you at home to-day, in order to ask you to come over on Tuesday next with your two young people. We are going to have a little hay-making after the olden fashion and a syllabub under the cow, hoping not to be disturbed by any of your grim old Puritans, as were the poor

¹ This does not seem quite to tally with Nathaniel Hawthorne's statement that " our old boy hardly said a word."

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folks of Merrymount. By the way, you do not do yourself justice at all in your preface to the *Twice Told Tales*—but more on that subject anon from

“ Yours truly,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

In addition to *Henry Smeaton* (a Jacobite story prior to 1715), *The Fate* was the only book published by James in 1851, and owing to its historical setting was very favourably received in America. The author wrote to Ollier :

“ Stockbridge, Massachusetts, U.S.

“ 5th October, 1851.

“ *The Fate* is highly popular here—considered the best book I ever wrote, by the critics at least. The whole of the first chapter was read in the Supreme Court the other day before Chief Justice Shaw to prove what was the state of England in the reign of James II. So says *The N.Y. Evening Post*, and I suppose it is true.

“ I wish I had you here with me to see the splendour of an American autumn in this most lovely scene. The landscape is all on fire with the colouring of the foliage, and yet so harmoniously blended are the tints from the brightest crimson to the deep green of the pines, that the effect is that of a continual sunset. Mountains, forests, lakes, streams, are all in a glow round us.

“ I have not written to you earlier because I wanted to find the treaty with Prussia in regard to Copyright, and also to see the head of a great German house here in America, so as to put you

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in the way of negotiating for the sale of my next book in Germany. But I have been too lame to leave my own house for anything but a morning's drive. I am so far better that I can now walk out for a mile or two, but my right hand and arm remain very painful. However, I think I shall be able to go to New York in ten days. . . .

"It is rather difficult to procure drafts upon England that one can be sure of, especially at the present moment of monetary crisis when the houses on which one relied the most are failing daily both in Boston and New York. . . .

"I am anxious to dedicate the first book I write to my own satisfaction to Lord Charles Clinton. He is one of the noblest minded men I ever met with—all truth and honour and straightforwardness. If you see him will you ask him for me whether he has any objection."¹

James was busily engaged in literary work during this year, writing *Pequinillo* and *Adrian, or the Clouds of the Mind* (both published in 1852). The latter work was written in collaboration with the ubiquitous Maunsell B. Field, who was in the habit of passing the summer at Stockbridge. His account of this joint authorship and of James's life in the village is given thus:²

¹ Lord Charles Clinton (1813-1894), second son of the fourth Duke of Newcastle, Captain 1st Life Guards and M.P. for Sandwich.

² *Memories of Many Men*, by M. B. Field. Charles Leigh James states that Field had a "mild intellectual countenance, bald about the temples. . . . Insanity, or something else cerebral, disabled Field for several years between our acquaintance at Stockbridge and the appearance of *Memories of Many Men*."

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“ James’s nature was so genial, and his fund of recollections and anecdotes so inexhaustible, that he soon became the friend of every man, woman, and child who lived in the neighbourhood. He bought property there ; but I fear that, notwithstanding his long india-rubber boots and affectation of rustic attire, he was not a success as a farmer. In the mean time he was industriously pegging away at book making, although to the casual observer he appeared to be the least occupied man in the place. He never did any literary work after eleven a.m. until evening. He was not accustomed to put his own hand to paper, when composing, but always employed an amanuensis. At this time he had in his service in that capacity the brother of an Irish baronet, who spoke and wrote English, French, German, and Italian, and whom I had procured for him at the modest stipend of five dollars a week.¹ When James was dictating

¹ This person, it seems, eventually proved unsatisfactory, and was succeeded by Mr. John G. Adams who, in 1910, wrote the following account of his experiences as James’s amanuensis :

“ My father, the late F. S. Adams, was the village physician at Stockbridge, Mass., and my uncle, J. D. Adams, was cashier of the Bank. In the summer of 1852 Mr. James, who had just begun his work, *Ticonderoga*, discharged his secretary for drunkenness, and asked my uncle what he could do, as his habit was to dictate. My uncle asked him to try me, though I was only a boy of 15 in the Village Academy. He did try me, and I worked for him for about seven weeks till the story was completed. He would naturally be tried by having so young and inexperienced a secretary, but he was kindness itself to me, always patient and thoughtful and a perfect gentleman. He would walk up and down his library and dictate by sentences.

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he always kept a paper of snuff upon the table on which his secretary wrote,¹ and he would stride up and down the room, stopping every few minutes for a fresh supply of the titillating powder. He never looked at the manuscript, or made any correction except upon the proof sheets. . . .

There was no shorthand writing at all. He had a sketch of the plan and plot of the book in outline prepared before, and a very brief analysis of what each chapter would contain. He had a large library of reference and other books. He gave me, when the first Saturday night came, a cheque for ten dollars for the week's work; which was the first money I had ever earned, and a very handsome recompense. I was at his house one evening when the mail arrived with news of the death of *the* Duke of Wellington, and he was very much affected by the news. One day, when he was to give the Oration [on Wellington] at Barrington (eight miles away) at the County Fair, he asked me along as his guest, and, as we drove, in our talk he advised me to learn the Persian language, saying its literature was so rich. Mr. James had a very charming personality, was so kind and considerate, lovable, generous, thoughtful of others' comfort, a most interesting talker, and altogether in my memory a splendid character. He was so very kind and good to me—a mere boy: a wonderfully pleasant memory to me."

¹ Mr. Adams mentions this fact; and contemporary references to James also allude to his prowess as a snuff-taker. Mr. Henry Dwight Sedgwick, in his *Reminiscences of Literary Berkshire* (*Century Magazine*, August, 1895), says: "Mr. James was a vigorous snuff-taker and was one of the last in the society of that day to sport the red bandana which that beguiling habit rendered indispensable." Mrs. Ashburner, of Stockbridge, relates: "He was an inveterate snuff-taker. He had a very effective manner of speech—forceful and animated—an expressive voice and great wit in repartee. The most remarkable feature was his eyes—dark brown and luminous—and his face changed constantly and lighted up. His hair and thick mustache were turning gray."

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“ One day he told me he was determined that we should write a novel together. . . . Our daily habit while engaged upon this work was as follows: At seven o'clock every evening we would retire into his library, and each read the other what he had written on that day. Some filing and dove-tailing was necessary to make the parts fit. Then we would determine what each was to do the next day—up to what point he was to carry his story. Now the hero was mine and the heroine was Mr. James's, and we were constantly and inevitably, in the progress of the tale, each distorting the ideal conception of the other. . . . After our evening's consultation, we retired to the dining-room and usually supped upon a finny haddock, prepared in national style by a Scotch cook. Mr. James threw all his heart, which was as fresh as that of a boy, into a book. While he was writing a story it was a reality to him. I remember that in our joint work the wife at one time ran away from her husband, for we married our hero and heroine in the middle of the book and left them, like young bears, to find all their troubles afterwards. She left a letter behind her, explaining her reasons for going. It fell to Mr. James's lot to write that letter, and when he read it to me his voice was choked, and he was overcome by emotion. . . . In five weeks after the book was commenced it was finished, and it was published under the title of *Adrian, or the Clouds of the Mind*.”

Although Field says James was not a success as a farmer, the novelist seems to have worked

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busily at the property he had acquired in the Negro Swamp district, for he tells Ollier in February, 1852 :

" The weather here has been most inclement ; but it has been favourable to a sort of agricultural operation called in Yankee parlance ' swamping '—i.e. getting timber and firewood out of the forest swamps. During two months, which the winter has lasted, I have got out more than three hundred thousand feet of timber ; but it has been with most extraordinary labour and constant attention—for the first thaw would have ruined all. I am just again setting out for the wood, and another week will make my whole operations safe. . . .

" I suppose *Pequinillo* is going through the press, as it is to be out soon according to the agreement between Mr. Newby and

" Yours ever,

" G. P. R. JAMES.

" Stockbridge."

In his next letter to Ollier, dated March 22nd, 1852, he writes :

" I am glad to hear what you say of *Revenge*—though the title is not one I would myself have chosen,¹ there being a tale of that name in *The Book of the Passions*—I think it is a good book, better in conception than in execution perhaps.

" Your comparison of Richardson and Johnson with myself and you will not hold. You are scantily remunerated for much trouble. Johnson had done nothing that I remember for

¹ See *ante* page 139, and later page 291.

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Richardson. As to Richardson's parsimony towards the great, good man, you explain it all in one word. The former was rich. Do you remember the fine poem of *Gaffer Grey*—Holcroft's, I believe.

' The poor man alone
To the poor man's moan
Of his morsel a morsel will give,
Gaffer Grey.'

" But this rule is not without splendid exceptions, of which I will one day give you an instance, which I think will touch you much.

" At present I am writing in great haste in the grey of the morning with snow all around me, the thermometer at 18, and my hand nearly frozen. Verily, we have here to pay for the hot summer and gorgeous autumn in the cold silver coinage of winter. I will, therefore, only say adieu. Pray let me hear something of your son Edmund. The progress of his genius in the campaign against the bad taste world interests

" Yours ever,

" G. P. R. JAMES."

The brief Stockbridge years of 1851-1852 passed all too quickly, amid pleasant society and lovely scenery and the occupations of literature and farming, and with them closed James's happy days. Could he have foreseen that only eight years of life yet remained to him, years that were to bring many troubles, sickness, and death, it cannot be doubted that he would have elected to remain quietly in Massachusetts. But the future was all unknown when, at the age of

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fifty-one, James decided to accept the appointment of British Consul at Norfolk, Virginia. This, of course, necessitated a fresh packing of traps and another removal, and the abandonment, with considerable financial loss, of his farm land and appliances near Stockbridge.

Before observing James in his new surroundings it may be noted that, on the eve of his departure from Massachusetts, he found time to go to Boston, to deliver, on November 10th, in the Melodeon of that city, an Oration on the late Duke of Wellington. He introduced some of his personal reminiscences of the Duke and gave an interesting address. James received a letter of thanks from the British residents of Boston, suggesting the desirability of printing the Oration in full. He replied that he could not furnish those portions of his address he omitted for want of time—"My notes were in general brief; and many of the pieces of paper, on which they were hurriedly written, I threw upon the floor of the hall as I went on." The Oration was published in 1853, and the two following letters to George Adlard relate to the matter.

"Stockbridge, Mass.

"15th November, 1852.

"... I have been both ill and busy to a degree I have rarely known. I am now on the eve of my departure for Norfolk (to-morrow). . . . I am much obliged by your kind offer to revise the Oration and accept it willingly. It needs much revision. However, I should like to see a final proof before the press renders a slip of the tongue irrevocable.

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“ In regard to the whole of the latter part of the Duke’s career I should have said much more, had there not been a monitor before my eyes which showed me that I had kept an unusually patient audience nearly two hours and a half. I did not venture to detain them longer on account of the Battle of Waterloo or any other battle. . . .”

“ Norfolk, Virginia.

“ 11th December, 1852.

“ I return the proofs with some rather heavy corrections. Before I left Stockbridge I scratched down the Oration, I think tolerably accurately from memory, as far as I had time. I kept half a sheet in order to go on, but I have done very little since. I will, however, finish it out to the best of my recollection and let you have the conclusion directly. Some passages I am sure of ; but others I am afraid are obscure to memory, and in those cases I should wish them to be corrected by Dr. Stone’s notes. . . .

“ The letter of the Committee I will answer when I have a moment to spare, but I find the affairs of this Consulate in such a condition that it takes me from seven in the morning till twelve at night to get them into some order. . . The letter of the Committee leaves it doubtful who is to pay for the printing of the Oration. I hope you remember that it was conceded that I was to bear the whole expense.

“ Can I do anything for your Insurance Company in Norfolk ? If so, command

“ Yours ever,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

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Charles Leigh James has a good deal to say about the social side of life as it would present itself to his father in the America of 1852 :

" I remember the Second World's Fair being held at New York in a hideous building with condemnable bulls' eyes around the ugly cupola. The first exposition of the sort was in London, and had been promoted largely by Prince Albert in 1851. To the World's Fair in New York came a little bright-eyed Jew boy, sixteen years old, with a mouse-trap of his own invention. As he stood looking at the novelties someone made off with the mouse-trap. But the Jew boy's eyes were pretty sharp, and the catching instinct was always extremely strong in his make-up. He pursued the fellow, got hold of him, and held him till the arrival of the police, who recognised a notorious crook. This incident was in all the papers under the paragraphic heading " How a Mouse-Trap Caught a Thief." As such my mother told it to me at the time. When the boy died, in his seventies, loaded down with raptures and wealth, I was reminded of it by his obituaries. His name was Jay Gould.

" Another very early and distinct recollection of mine is being taken to a band concert led by the immortal Jullien. I did not appreciate music until a later period, though I faintly remember noise enough to please a boy : but I was impressed with the personality of Jullien, whose name was then as magical as Jenny Lind's. Not much taller than Tom Thumb ; so richly clad in such irreproachable ' full dress '—long tails, white choker, and white kid gloves complete ; so elaborately full dressed to a hair, and

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so perfectly *comme il faut* in action that to remark it would be committing the vulgarity of supposing that he could be anything else—Jullien made his bow to the audience, turned his eyes to the musicians, stood (concealed) behind his music book, and then the monstrous baton began to move. It moved at first with a sort of divine automatism, like Prometheus's vulture 'sailing round the cloudy crags Caucasian.' But when the musicians had got the afflatus; when the stream of sound became impetuous; when the leader's individual genius was required to moderate what that of the composer had inspired—then the baton began to be spasmodic, and Jullien's top-knot to appear; and when the torrent was dashing and foaming over the verge of a cataract, then Jullien, fully visible—say not on tiptoe, but soaring towards his native skies—appeared to bestow a piece of himself on every breeze and all his soul upon the baton, which struggled like a Titan, but with aim and purpose in every furious flourish. And yet he was not quite torn to pieces—there was enough continuity to keep us unafraid of his flying into atoms. He used to wind up by sinking exhausted into a great arm-chair. After his sun had set there were those who said he was a quack and a sensationalist. He died insane I have somewhere read. I am not surprised at it.¹

¹ Louis Antoine Jullien (1812-1860), composer of the famous British Army Quadrilles, gave his first band concerts at Drury Lane in 1840. He organised the opera season of 1847-1848, when Sims Reeves made his début. His vogue lasted until 1859. Later, Jullien became bankrupt and was arrested for debt. He died insane at Neuilly.

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"General Tom Thumb, with his *avant courier* Barnum, came with a circus to Berkshire, Mass., and pitched his tent, not exactly at Stockbridge, but somewhere near, and we went to see him. Tom Thumb could not then have been much over fifteen years old.¹ I was told he thrashed a small boy who ventured to make his small size an excuse for taking liberties. There was also an elephant equally intolerant of indignities. A loafer gave him a piece of tobacco, instead of a cake, which others were offering to the mammoth. The elephant threw it away with a snort of disgust, and the keeper warned the fellow not to go near Behemoth any more. Next day, however, he put himself within trunk range, and, sure enough, the elephant lifted him from earth and sent him flying through the canvas, breaking some of his ribs. I also saw a (stuffed) hippopotamus—then the only one on exhibition. It had been imported alive by Barnum, but, through ignorance of its needs, was inadequately supplied with water; the result of which cruelty and insufferable torture was that the poor creature on passing one of the Great Lakes broke loose and plunged into the water. After terrorising people for a few days, he was at last shot by some one. It was not bigger than a hog.

¹ Tom Thumb, some five years previously, had been exhibited in London at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, when as poor Benjamin Haydon noted in April, 1846: "Tom Thumb had 12,000 people last week: B. R. Haydon 133½ (the ½ a little girl) . . . They rush by thousands to see Tom Thumb. They push, they fight, they scream, they faint. . . . It is an insanity, a *rabies*, a madness. . . ."

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“ While on this subject I once made some one laugh by saying it seemed to me the circuses were not as good as they used to be, but met the laugh by telling some of the things I saw in my childhood. One was the man who walked fly-fashion on a small suspended ceiling. He began by putting on peculiar shoes, but whether they were suckers or horse-shoe magnets, which would imply that the ceiling was iron, I cannot tell. Two men went underneath, with arms extended to catch him in case of accident. Anyhow it was a fearful and painful sight—much worse than the small boys riding, purple-faced, on their heads. The man who broke rocks with his fist was also quite an attraction.

“ Anderson, the celebrated Danish magician, would produce a bottle and call on the audience to state what they would drink. Temperance sentiment was not advanced to the point that any one had a scruple about naming his favourite ‘poison.’ And whatever it was—gin, claret, beer, soda-water, champagne—he got it, all out of the same bottle, except that once in a while some fresh youth who demanded brandy-smash, no doubt quite by accident, got Epsom Salts. . . . At this time there was going through the United States a Chinese troupe, whose performances were said to be most extraordinary. I never saw them, but Courtenay did, and he used to tell with admiration how the boy’s head was cut off, whereupon the neck did not remain a cross-section but contracted with ghastliest realism, allowing the spinal column to protrude. At the first exhibition, the populace was ready to tear down the theatre, and would

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not be satisfied till the heathen showed the boy alive.

"I remember the presidential election in which the Whig party, headed by General Scott, was annihilated. The triumphant democrats were firing cannon at night with a noise which appeared to me terrific. It was the President, Pierce, at this time, who appointed Hawthorne to the consulship at Liverpool. At the time of the election Pierce was little known—perhaps he owed his easy success to his obscurity. During the canvass there was a microscopic book published by the Whigs with the title *The Life and Adventures of Franklin Pierce*. The first page told where and when he was born ; the second page repeated this information, and so on to the end. I remember that just after the election, before the inauguration, he met with a serious accident, being thrown from a carriage and badly hurt.

"At Stockbridge I remember something very curious. We had received and planted some Egyptian wheat taken from the inside of a mummy case. It came up, and I saw it growing ; but it did not seed 'worth a continental.' I remember, too, seeing a green snake, which I was told must not be killed, though other snakes were, because it was harmless and an omen of rain.

"Of our servants there was a cook (Scotch) who told me the story of the minister who dined with a stingy laird almost wholly on rabbits shot within the grounds, and who, on being asked to pronounce a blessing, delivered the following :

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' Rabbits hot and rabbits cold,
Rabbits young and rabbits old,
Rabbits tender, rabbits tough,
So thank the Lord, we have enough.'

The Irish girls followed us to Virginia, so did the German boy, whose name was Peter. At Stockbridge my father employed another Irishman as coachee.

" I remember that while we were at Stockbridge my brother Walter started on his own account as a civil engineer, also that he had a job surveying or projecting, which I imagine my father thought rather *infra dig.*"

Charles James mentions the difficulty his parents found in reconciling themselves to the democratic views and free and easy manner of Americans—so different to the dignified and exclusive society to which they had hitherto been accustomed in England. He says :

" While inwardly despising and privately ridiculing the etiquettes of democratic New England, my parents, like grown-up people of the world, were careful to adopt them. There came to the house for the purpose of doing some tin-smith's or plumber's work a certain Yankee who, with the versatility of his race, was also a tailor, and what besides the Deuce knows! I was solemnly instructed by my mother that this Jack-of-all-Trades must, by the custom of the country, be called a ' gentleman ' and not a ' man.' Seeing no reason why he should not be called a gentleman until he should prove himself something else, I rather approved the custom of the country. But some time after I in-

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cautiously described as a 'joke' some slightly facetious remark of my mother's to the 'gentleman' who kept the 'store' where we mostly traded; whereupon she majestically informed me that she did not joke with *that sort of people*. . . . My parents' minds had been formed in the reaction against the French Revolution, and the democracy of America continually recalled to them the terrors of their childhood. Hence the arbitrary ethics, the 'do-as-you-are-told-because-you-are,' the conservative dread of what is 'not usual,' the desire to keep 'that sort of people' at a distance. . . . If I had seen more of my father, who was naturally a good deal buried in his books, I might have found it easier to be candid with him, for he liked an argument and could be put in an attitude of dialectical defence directly by attacking him with logic on an abstract question."

Mr. H. D. Sedgwick, in his *Reminiscences of Literary Berkshire*, related an amusing anecdote of James and his attitude to American society :

"He was very amiable, and I remember but one occasion when he was roused to any display of warmth. At a dinner in Stockbridge, Mr. Daniel B. Stanton, who had been giving recollections of the habits of English society, remarked that it was the general practice in London to hire pyramids of hot-house fruit to be put on the dining-room table merely for ornament. The fruit was offered in turn to each guest, but it was perfectly understood that this was a form only and the invitation was never to be accepted. Before he had become familiar with the usage, however, Mr. Stanton had



FRANCES THOMAS,
Wife of G. P. R. JAMES.

A portrait taken later in life when a widow.
Block by courtesy of Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton.

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unwarily broken off a cluster of grapes from a large bunch and irrevocably eaten them. Too late he observed, on turning to the lady of the house, that she was looking daggers at him, and he was never invited there again. During the telling of this story Mr. James grew redder and redder, and hardly waiting for it to be finished, called out in a cynical tone, 'Pray, what sort of society did you keep in London, Mr. Stanton?' Mr. Stanton, in his turn, looked very black, but suddenly his brow cleared, and he cried out in a tone of checkmate, 'The very best of society *there*, Mr. James,' with a prodigious emphasis on the final adverb."

So it was, James was never at home in America, and though he debated the question of becoming a naturalised American it was, as Curtis, a member of the Harper firm, said, "*impossible*. John Bull might as well hope to become a 'mounseer.' James was entirely an Englishman. He looked it, he talked it, he felt it. . . . He was a London citizen."

This was written of James in New York or Massachusetts. It was in the coming years in Virginia that he was to experience the full bitterness of the truth that he was indeed a stranger in a strange land.

CHAPTER VI

The British Consul in Virginia

IT was in November, 1852, that G. P. R. James arrived at his new post, as British Consul, in Norfolk, Virginia, to look things over before his family followed him. In the later words of his son Charles—a child of six at this period—"Had he understood the southern temper as well then as afterwards, he might have looked them over a little longer before sending for us. However, he did so before the winter set in. I remember our descent of Chesapeake Bay in a steamer. For some cause, long since forgotten, I volunteered one of those unmelodious solos with which children of six or less not infrequently entertain their elders. Walter took me up and carried me into the ship's kitchen, prevailingly dark, but lit with a fire of lurid red around which black figures were moving, all so complete a cyclorama of the orthodox place where bad boys go when they die, that I, being very sensible of deserving it, was awed into silence, though the sceptical side of me was busy inquiring how Hell came to be on board a steamboat. . . . I remember coming in sight of the wharf at Norfolk, where we again saw my father—waiting for us."

There, on the dreary quay in the dull and dismal December weather, James and his family

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were reunited, and proceeded, no doubt forlornly, to an hotel, whence in a short time they removed, on January 6th, 1853, to a house in East Street with surroundings and atmosphere compact of wharves, dead dogs and cats, poor Irish and concomitant pigs—a change indeed from the pleasant homes of Walmer, Willey, and Stockbridge. But far worse things than these were to come. Poor James soon found that he had been appointed to the most undesirable and unhealthy and depressing station in the States. Although Norfolk was adjacent to the wide mouth of the river Elizabeth and the open sea of Chesapeake Bay, the climate was extremely deleterious, owing to the proximity of the Great Dismal Swamp, forcing-pit of fever and ague ; and yellow fever was brought every summer by ships from the West Indies, culminating in the terrible epidemic of 1855. In addition, mosquitoes abounded, the streets of Norfolk were very insanitary, and the place was often swept by hurricanes—" they would tear up large trees by the roots, throw down brick walls, suck up and scatter the water, and fill the streets with frogs and fish taken up at the same time." Such was the new home of G. P. R. James, who, bereft of all congenial society, and in failing health himself, had to work hard and late to set in order the affairs of the Consulate, much neglected by an incompetent predecessor.

The Great Dismal Swamp, which lay a few miles to the south of Norfolk, had, however, its picturesque and romantic aspects. Its inner mysteries were unexplored, and many were the tales of runaway slaves and murdered maroons

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attaching to the great marsh. Ghost legends, too, of terrible people of the mist were numerous; and when a heavy fall of rain was impending at night the sky would be lit up, as if by a great fire, by the Wind Lights—exhalations of the swamp. These aspects of the Great Dismal Swamp naturally appealed to the romantic imagination of James, and he fully described the locality in his subsequent tale, *The Old Dominion, or the Southampton Massacre* (1856). His picture of the district is of dense woods, then a track through breaks and fallen trees and mud, leading to the actual swamp—resembling a wild and dismal moor, hemmed in on every side by a belt of lowering forest. In the midst of all the great lake, seven miles long. *Dred, A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*, by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, also appeared in 1856.

Thomas Moore had been much impressed by this weird district, and one of its legends was the basis of his ballad, *The Lake of the Dismal Swamp*:

“ They made her a grave, too cold and damp
For a soul so warm and true ;
And she’s gone to the Lake of the Dismal
Swamp,
Where, all night long, by a fire-fly lamp
She paddles her white canoe.

Away to the Dismal Swamp he speeds—
His path was rugged and sore,
Through tangled juniper, beds of reeds,
Through many a fen, where the serpent feeds
And man never trod before.

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Till he hollowed a boat of the birchen bark,
Which carried him off from the shore ;
Far he followed the meteor spark,
The wind was high and the clouds were dark,
And the boat returned no more.

But oft from the Indian hunter's camp
This lover and maid so true
Are seen at the hour of midnight damp,
To cross the Lake, by a fire-fly lamp,
And paddle their white canoe."

Tom Moore saw the Great Dismal Swamp some fifty years before G. P. R. James arrived there. It was in 1803, when Moore, as a young man of twenty-four, was on his journey to Bermuda, to enjoy his sinecure post of Registrar of the Court of Vice-Admiralty. He stayed at Norfolk, Virginia, with Colonel John Hamilton, the British Consul, in the same house, at the corner of Main Street and King's Lane, which was occupied for a time in later years by G. P. R. James as British Consul at Norfolk.¹ Tom Moore died in 1852, the year James went to Virginia. Such are the coincidences of biography.

The summer of 1853 proved to be appallingly hot. James remained in Norfolk some time after he had sent his family away for a sojourn in a more healthy part of the coast. The thermometer in his consulate office stood at 103 degrees for a long number of days in succession. His son relates: "Among our acquaintance was Commodore Barron of the U.S.

¹ An old view of this house in Norfolk is reproduced in *Tom Moore in Bermuda*, by J. C. L. Clark, of Lancaster, Massachusetts.

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Navy. He had been employed on the Guinea Coast, under the equator, in stopping the exportation of slaves from Africa, but he said during this season America was the hottest country in the world, and Norfolk the hottest place in America. He told my father also that when men were dying at a great rate of yellow fever (which is an African disease unknown in the New World till they began importing negroes, and never carried as far west as the mountains) an old coloured woman informed him that he ought to give the crew burnt wood. Interpreting this to mean charcoal, he tried it with beneficial results. In consequence of this I was sometimes condemned to eat charcoal."

The great heat naturally increased the diseases rampant in the locality, including a variety peculiar to the Virginian swamps known as "black tongue fever." As a climax to his misfortunes, James had to endure unpopularity and calumny in Norfolk. The great Slave Agitation was then paramount, and James being reported as in favour of abolition of slavery, he was hated and attacked by the slave owners of this southern town to an extent which culminated in eight incendiary outrages at or near his house. He also received an anonymous letter containing threats to kill him. He was advised to carry a pistol, but replied that his cane was good enough to break an assailant's head—his "cane" being a heavy hunting-crop, with ivory handle, a relic of his English days.

No wonder that at the end of his first year in Norfolk poor James was quite out of heart, and

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expressed his feelings thus in a letter to Charles Ollier, dated November 6th, 1853 :

“ . . . I cannot feel that an appointment, of very small value, to the dearest and most unhealthy city in the United States (with the exception of New Orleans) is altogether what I had a right to hope for or expect. You must recollect that I never asked for the consulate of Virginia, where there is neither society for my family, resources or companionship for myself, nor education to be procured for my little boy ; where I am surrounded by swamps and marsh miasma, eaten up by mosquitoes and black flies, and baked under an atmosphere of molten brass, with the thermometer in the shade at 103 ; where every article of first necessity, with the exception of meat, is sixty per cent. dearer than in London ; where the only literature is the ledger, and the arts only illustrated in the slave market.

“ I hesitated for weeks ere I accepted ; and only did so at length upon the assurances given that this was to be a step to something better, and upon the conviction that I was killing myself by excessive literary labours. Forgive me for speaking somewhat bitterly ; but I feel I have not been well used. You have known me more than thirty years, and during that time I do not think you ever before heard a complaint issue from my lips. I am not a habitual grumbler—but ‘ the galled jade will wince.’

“ I am very grateful to Scott for his kind efforts, and perhaps they may be successful ; for Lord Clarendon,¹ who is I believe a perfect

¹ The fourth Earl. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1853-1858.

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gentleman himself, when he comes to consider the society in which I have been accustomed to move, my character, my habits of thought, and the sort of place which Norfolk is—if he knows anything about it—must see that I am not in my proper position there. He has no cause of enmity or ill-will towards me, and my worst enemy could not wish me a more unpleasant position. If I thought that I was serving my country better than I could elsewhere, I would remain without asking for a change; but the exact reverse is the case. The slave dealers have got up a sort of outcry against me—I believe because, under Lord Clarendon's own orders, I have successfully prosecuted several cases of kidnapping negroes from the West Indies—and the consequence is that not a fortnight passes but an attempt is made to burn my house down. The respectable inhabitants of Norfolk are indignant at this treatment of a stranger, and the authorities have offered a reward for the apprehension of the offenders; but nothing has proved successful. This outcry is altogether unjust and unreasonable; for I have been perfectly silent upon the question of slavery since I have been here, judging that I had no business to meddle with the institutions of a foreign country in any way. But I will not suffer any men, when I can prevent or punish it, to reduce to slavery British subjects without chastisement.

“ You will be sorry to hear that this last year in Norfolk has been very injurious to my health; and I am just now recovering from a sharp attack of the fever and ague peculiar to this

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climate. It seized me just as I set out for the West—the great, the extraordinary West. Quinine had no effect upon it, but I learned a remedy in Wisconsin which has cured the disease entirely, though I am still very weak. What do you think of sulphur and treacle? Each time I felt the fit coming on, and found my fingers and lips turning blue, I took enough sulphur to make me odious to myself, and in ten or fifteen minutes the shivering subsided in gentle perspiration. Charlie has never recovered from the effects of a Norfolk spring and is very thin, but as active in mind and body as ever. Walter has done all sorts of fine things in engineering and has got a good appointment. But I must end by once more bidding you believe me ever,

“Yours faithfully,

“G. P. R. JAMES.”

The real cause of James's unpopularity among the slave owners of the Norfolk locality—in addition to the fact that he was the representative of England, a country opposed to slave traffic—was a curious literary incident, which dated back to his intimacy with Charles Lever. In *The Dublin University Magazine*, 1846,¹ at a time when there was talk of American interference in Irish affairs, there appeared a mediocre poem purporting to be “Lines by G. P. R. James,” prefixed as follows by a note from Lever, who was himself the Editor :

“MR. EDITOR.—The accompanying lines I forward for insertion in your Magazine, exactly as I received them ; nor, although not intended

¹ Vol. xxvii, pp. 341-2.

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for the public eye, do I fear any reproach from their distinguished writer in offering them for publication unauthorised. They are bold, manly, and well-timed. Yours, L.

‘ My dear L——. I send you the song you wished to have. The Americans totally forgot when they so insolently calculated upon aid from Ireland in a war with England, that their own apple is rotten at the core. A nation with five or six millions of slaves, who would go to war with an equally strong nation with no slaves, is a mad people.

‘ Yours, G. P. R. JAMES.’ ”

A cloud is on the western sky,
There's tempest o'er the sea,
And bankrupt States are blustering high,
But not a whit care we.
Our guns shall roar, our steel shall gleam
Before Columbia's distant stream
Shall own another's sway.
We'll take our stand,
And draw the brand,
As in the ancient day.

They count on feuds within the Isle,
They think the sword is broke,
They look to Ireland and they smile—
But let them bide the stroke.
When rendered one in hand and heart,
By robber war and swindler art,
Home griefs are cast away,
We take our stand,
And draw the brand,
As in the ancient day.

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Oh, let them look to where in bonds
For help their bondsmen cry—
Oh, let them look ere British hands
Wipe out that living lie.
Beneath the flag of Liberty
We'll sweep the wide Atlantic Sea,
And tear their chains away ;
There take our stand,
And draw the brand,
As in the ancient day.

Veil, starry banner, veil your pride,
The blood-red cross before,
Emblem of that by Jordan's side,
Man's freedom-price that bore.
No land is strong that owns a slave,
Vain is it wealthy, crafty, brave :
Our freedom for our stay,
We'll take our stand,
And draw the brand,
As in the ancient day.

Shout, dusky millions, through the world!
Ye scourge-driven nations, shout!
The flag of Liberty's unfurled,
And Freedom's sword is out!
The slaver's boastful thirst of gain,
Tends but to break his bondsman's chain,
And Britain's on the way
To take her stand,
And draw the brand,
As in the ancient day.

One can well believe that when some busy-body in Norfolk raked out this old volume of

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The Dublin University Magazine and circulated the poem in the district, resentment against James was keen—and justified from the slave-owners' point of view. But a truly Hibernian feature of the incident is that it is doubtful whether poor James wrote the poem, or knew anything at all about its publication in 1846! Both the biographers of Charles Lever, Mr. W. J. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Edmund Downey, came to the conclusion that the whole affair was a joke of Lever's at the expense of his rather prim friend, James. Mr. Downey has stated to the present writer that "Lever was very fond of this sort of humour, and his manner of introducing it to the Editor of *The D.U.M.* supports the theory (or fact) that it was one of Lever's jests. He frequently had a dig at America (as Dickens had) in connection with its shrieking about Freedom while it employed slaves."

On the other hand, there is no documentary evidence to prove the poem was written by Lever, for his remark on hearing of the persecution James suffered in Virginia in 1853—"God forgive me, it was my doing; but I had no more idea that James's Powder could stir up national animosity than that Holloway's Ointment could absorb a Swiss glacier"—might well refer to his printing lines "not intended for the public eye . . . publication unauthorised." If a joke, it was a pointless one, for Lever could not foresee in 1846 that James would hold an official position in America seven years later. Whatever the solution of the authorship of the poem, the consequences of its publication were very painful, as already related, to James. The situation

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was not improved by the part he took in another affair dealing with the slave question at this agitated period. A negro sailor was in danger of being hanged at Charleston, South Carolina, for aiding the escape of a fugitive slave. The accused claimed to be a British subject, having been born at St. Thomas, but as that island had been ceded to Denmark the question of the man's nationality was a nice one. The British Consul at Charleston being unable apparently to cut the gordian knot, James was requested to deal with the matter. He was informed by the Governor of South Carolina that if the sailor was convicted in such a rapid city as Charleston his life was doomed, and the only hope for the man was an able lawyer. James at once secured the services of a barrister named Chandler, of Norfolk, who at the trial ably urged the legal point of the accused's nationality and the further fact that he, being a native of the West Indies, would not naturally know that a negro of South Carolina was almost certain to be a slave. He secured an acquittal—a great triumph in view of the fact that the jury was largely composed of slave owners. James was delighted, though the incident increased the ill-will of his neighbours—those who supported the slave system in Norfolk. However, as time went on, and the new Consul's merits both in official and private life were apparent, persecution died down, and even the slave-owners of Norfolk came to like and respect James. Charles James, in his *MS. Autobiography*, often speaks of the Slave Question, and it seems that his father was not really a keen opposer of the system. He says :

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"It was not easy to manage without employing slave labour, but my father did not consider that his official position as agent of a government so anti-slavery as the British would allow of that. My mother, however, with her own money, hired a black cook who was a slave. She was just such another fat old creature as Aunt Chloe. My parents thought a great deal of her. Poor old soul, she died of yellow fever during the great visitation (we were in Wisconsin), and my father said, with tears in his eyes, that he expected nothing else on first hearing of her illness, for she had been taken sick once before since we had her, and nothing would keep up her courage but having 'Massa' talk to her—'Massa' being himself: her legal owner, who let her out like a quadruped, was nothing to her. Her name was Kitty—Aunt Kitty in southern parlance."

Charles James also mentions the amazing insolence of the negro waiters at Willard's Hotel, Washington, before the outbreak of war, and how a southerner shot one of them dead for misbehaviour, the result being a great uproar in the anti-slavery newspapers. He continues:

"This winter (1853) *The Old Folks at Home* was the popular song eternally being murdered in the streets. That southern people in those days of impending secession were not acquainted with abolition song and literature is among delusions of northern people. I know better.

"A person we used to know at Norfolk was Dr. Mallory, I suppose the one who had a celebrated interview with General Butler later on. He demanded the rendition of some niggers

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who had run away. Butler said : " You are a lawyer, Dr. Mallory. As such, I suppose you hold that negro slaves are property ? " " Of course. " " And you also know that the State of Virginia is out of the Union, and is now at war with the United States ? " " Yes. " " Well, then, I should like you to tell me whether such property is not contraband of war (that is liable to confiscation for military purposes). " This was how negroes came to be called contraband, and was the first open declaration of purpose not to give up the slaves of rebel masters. Like most Virginians of the time, Mallory was rather addicted to the flowing bowl.

" I remember an old gentleman named Thomson, next to whom we lived. At Niagara Falls, in 1855, we found his negro coachman driving a hack. Some abolition emissary had prevailed on him to run away. He was now hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt. He did not find it so easy to make a living as when he was a favoured slave. And it was cold in Canada. He wanted my father to ask Thomson to take him back.

" Captain Maury, U.S.N., afterwards a rebel, but a distinguished man of science, dwelt at Norfolk. It was in his works that people first seemed to have learned about the principal circulation of the wind.¹ There were also some queer old ladies named Grigsby. One of them had a trick of saying ' I couldn't do it,' meaning nothing but an exclamation like ' Oh! dear me ': but those who did not know it were sometimes astonished with a sense which was

¹ Maury was also a famous hydrographer.

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not intended. There was also a certain General Gwyn, who had been in the Mexican and Seminole Wars, and was now blind. He had a pretty daughter named Virginia, not more than about fifteen, who played sweetly on that obsolete instrument the harp. I ought not to omit mentioning the music of those years. Pianos were black square tables with crooked carved legs, on which English travellers of the Dickens and Trollope kind accused Americans of putting pantalettes. Miss Gwyn had a tribe of brothers, whose language exhibited all the profane liberty of young America, and impressed my father with the necessity of keeping me from low company: though considering the world I was to go into afterwards, this reminds me of the felon who wanted an umbrella on his way to the gallows because it was a rainy morning.

"Our German Peter left us before long. After he was gone, my father hired a free nigger, James Robinson by name—we never used the Robinson. With this man I established those relations which, as Mrs. Stowe relates, were general between the master's child and some blackamoor or other in every southern household.

"I recall, upon reflection, a few more incidents of that first winter at Norfolk. One was being taken by my mother to see the so-called Aztec Children; a boy and girl of uncertain race who were being exhibited and made quite a sensation. They could not speak, and evidently had only about the same intelligence as trained dogs. Public interest in them rather died out when men of science pronounced that they were

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not representatives of any possible tribe, but only 'freaks'—twin brother and sister, doubtless, born on some plantation. 'Another incident I recall was a little laughable. An unlucky Englishman who came to the Consulate, and so to the parlour, said something about a 'possum,' which was inferred to mean that he would like to eat one. So he was invited to try. 'Possums' are by no means hard to get in Virginia. The negroes esteem them highly, but white people seldom eat them. So the luckless one came to dinner, and there was the 'possum' with its hideously child-like face, white feet and hands, and hairless tail. As far as I remember, it was good eating—much resembling pig—but my relatives said it was all grease, and their compassion on the Englishman who had asked for it was touching.

"My father's predecessor in the consular office at Norfolk had left a bad name. The sea captains who knew him always brought a witness for fear of being cheated. When they saw the consular table of fees, which my father hung up in the office, they opened their eyes and said they had never seen that thing before. He left in much poverty a young secretary whose name was Frederick Cridland. My father procured him a regular appointment as Vice-Consul, which he gave up to accompany us to Venice. He was Consul at Mobile during the war; and when last I heard of him at Charleston."

During the first year in Norfolk, James's two elder sons set out to seek their fortune further afield. The second boy, Courtenay, then aged seventeen, sailed for Labrador, owing to

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attempted paternal chastisement for the crime of smoking. Walter went to Wisconsin ; he was accompanied thither by his father and sister, G. P. R. James rejoining his wife and youngest son at Winchester in November, 1853. During his Norfolk consulate James generally had leave for three months, August to November, and he and his family travelled much, in addition to sojourns at Old Point Comfort, Baltimore, and Washington. Among other celebrities of those regions, James knew Ole Bull, the violinist, Judge Taney, John Tyler (ex-President), and Madame Jerome Bonaparte, formerly Elizabeth Patterson. American society seems to have been very festive in those early days, and Charles James's account of its spontaneous gaiety and high spirits has been confirmed by the later reminiscences of his namesake, Mr. Henry James. Charles says : " Dancing was the grown people's chief pleasure, and no lady was so indefatigable as Madame Jerome Bonaparte, the Belle of Baltimore. She had no idea of ever growing old, and would dance off this mortal stage. My father once asked her if she believed in anything else, to which she promptly answered 'No.' She was no longer quite as young as she had been, for her own son (father of the one in Roosevelt's cabinet) must have been at least forty-eight years old. Her father, a rich Baltimore merchant, was a true eighteenth-century free thinker, who said, when dying, that those present should observe how a philosopher met the inevitable."

Elizabeth Patterson, born on February 6th, 1785, met Jerome Bonaparte when he was a

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naval lieutenant cruising off Baltimore, and, although the match was opposed by her parents, they were married on Christmas Eve, 1803. A few months later came the great news that Napoleon had assumed the title of Emperor, and it was further announced that the American Miss Patterson was not suitable for the honour of being the Emperor's sister-in-law. The Jerome Bonapartes set out for Europe, and at Lisbon the pusillanimous husband deserted the high-spirited Elizabeth. She was refused a landing at all Continental ports under the control of Napoleon, and eventually found refuge in England, where her son was born. Her husband she never saw again except once, in 1822, when she cut him dead in the Pitti Palace picture gallery. He was then a dethroned monarch. Earlier, when he was King of Westphalia, he offered his wife a title and a large pension; while at the same time the Emperor Napoleon offered her a small pension. She accepted the latter, informing her husband that "she preferred to be sheltered under the wings of an eagle rather than to be suspended from the bill of a goose." Jerome then offered her a home in his diminutive kingdom of Westphalia, where he had his second wife. Elizabeth replied: "It is indeed a large kingdom, but not large enough to hold *two Queens*." She wandered about Europe, royal only in retrospect. Henry Edward Fox (the last Lord Holland) met her in Florence in 1828, and relates:

"Mrs. Patterson is an American. Her manners are so vulgar and her conversation so malicious, so indecent, and so profligate, that

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even her very pretty features do not make one excuse such want of delicacy or feminine feeling in a woman. . . . She owned to me she was extremely in love with Jerome at the time of her marriage ; that he admired her with rapture, and gave her *many, many* daily proofs of the warmth of his affection."

Elizabeth Patterson eventually returned to her early home, Baltimore, where Charles James describes her when she must, even then, have been an old woman. She died in a boarding-house there in 1879, at the age of ninety-four. Curiously enough, she linked up Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington as connections by marriage, because her brother, Robert Patterson, was the first husband of Mary Caton, who married the Marquis Wellesley, elder brother of Wellington.

To return to Charles James's recollections of Baltimore society :

" I shall not easily forget the great ball-room at Old Point Comfort on those hot nights, with the windows open ; the mosquitoes, whom bats followed to devour ; the glare of the lights ; the fiddles perched up high—the leader demoniacally yelling : ' Chassey, ladies ! Chain ! Turn partners ! ' and the rest of it ; the overheated multitude of the fair and the brave ; the mint-juleps ; and the things folk said. Those were tremendously décolleté days. Two young men, out of the ladies' hearing, were indulging their admiration after their own fashion when a belle went by, and one said to the other : ' A perfect galaxy of beauty ! ' ' I thought,' said his friend (who observed there was only one girl), ' I thought a galaxy was a constellation.' "



ELIZABETH PATTERSON,

Wife of JEROME BONAPARTE.

*By courtesy of Mrs. A. M. W. Stirling from the picture by Gilbert Stuart,
in the possession of Countess Moltke-Huitfeldt (née Bonaparte).*

[Facing page 186.]

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‘So it is,’ replied the first, ‘don’t you see the Milky Way?’ Soon after, another girl went by in the very height or lowness of fashion. ‘That one goes ahead of them all,’ remarked the first youth. ‘Yes,’ said the other, ‘she outstrips the whole party.’

“Language fails in doing any justice to the mosquitoes. Somebody or other had a garment termed then a ‘josey,’ whose colour, at the beginning of the season, was a brilliant red. There were then no aniline dyes to fade. (They came in during 1859, as I remember very distinctly.) Well, at the end of its term that ‘josey’ had become black. What made it so?—crushed mosquitoes. Honest and true; black and blue. This is not a snake story.

“It must have been now that I first saw something considerable of Baltimore, where we had so many friends, on the whole a very beautiful city. The forts bombarded by the British in 1812 are picturesque features of the view, which is quite fine, extending over the beautiful bay, the generally handsome city, and the mighty mass of shipping. It was during the bombardment that Key wrote *The Star-Spangled Banner*. He was on board an American vessel which had been sent with a flag of truce to negotiate for the release of some prisoners.

“The people whose acquaintance I made at Old Point Comfort were numerous and some of them quite distinguished. As often happens at a southern watering place, almost the whole village appeared an annexe to one large hotel, whose proprietor had erected a lot of cottages—cabins, as they call them there—to rent to

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people who liked privacy. The proprietor's name was Reynolds. Though he must have been quite rich, he continued to utilise every way by which money could be made. His wife, a great fat woman, gave instruction in the art of swimming at a bath house built into the sea. There was a boy in the family who gave private theatricals and recruited his pocket fund by sale of tickets. Reynolds laid the foundation of his fortune in California. He had bad luck with all his early ventures ; for at that time everything was brought all the way around Cape Horn, and whatever he ordered, observing it to be scarce, was bound to be a drug before the cargo arrived. At last it occurred to him that others ordered on the same principle as himself, and that the way to get ahead of them was to order something now plentiful, relying on its being exhausted before the cargo arrived. He selected percussion caps, and made money out of them ; after which he always made a point of ordering against a glut.

"Commodore Barron was usually at Old Point Comfort during the season, and so was Farragut, then also a commodore. He had a son about my age who bore the suggestive name of Loyal. Later he published his father's memoirs. I played with him a good deal. I have an idea that the shadow of secession was drawing near. It began to fall when Pierce's administration came in.

"Chief Justice Taney (pronounced Tawny) used to spend the summer at Old Point Comfort with his family. We were well acquainted with them. He was of gigantic stature, very

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lean and wrinkled, but upright in bearing, and must have been quite old. His wife was a little withered-up old woman. An ex-President of the United States took notice of me, and by his request my mother sent me to him for a visit. This was John Tyler, a very white-haired man."

On his return to Norfolk, James moved into a larger and altogether better house in Granby Street, one side facing the open water of the "Branch": but even this dwelling was infested with the centipedes and rats so horribly numerous in Virginia. From here, James wrote to his publishers, the Harpers:

" British Consulate,
" Norfolk, Va.

" December 14th, 1853.

" I cannot but feel as I have always declared that you have uniformly treated me with kindness and liberality, and that you have been eminently gentlemanly and fair in all our mutual dealings. . . . I feel that you have cause to complain of my not returning the proofs of *Ticonderoga* as rapidly as possible. I have been wandering over half the surface of the Continent. I only returned here a few days ago. . . . Since my return I have been occupied in moving out of my half-consumed house into one not so much exposed to incendiaries. . . . As the work will not be published in London yet, I think I shall be in time to make the two editions appear simultaneously.

" Although a few hundred thousand dollars is not as much to you as a few thousand to me,

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yet I know that such a loss as you have sustained¹ must be a great mortification to the wealthiest and most generous man, and therefore I beg you to accept my true sympathy.

“ Ever yours truly,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

Here, in Granby Street, on May 24th, 1854, James gave his usual dinner in celebration of the Queen's birthday, and decorated his parlour with a huge British flag reaching from ceiling to floor.²

Despite his official work, his ill-health and troubles, James continued to write, though in a much lesser degree than in the happy days of leisure and prosperity in England. In 1853 he published *Agnes Sorrel* and *The Vicissitudes of a Life* (which contains some autobiographical matter), and in 1854 *Ticonderoga, or The Black Eagle*, a story he had commenced three years earlier. *Prince Life; A Story for My Boy*, 1856, was also belated in its public appearance, for Charles James notes in his copy: “ This book was written for me at Stockbridge, Mass., about 1852. I wanted something written for me like *The Wonder Book* for Hawthorne's children, C. L. J.” *The Old Dominion, or the Southampton Massacre*, written in the Granby Street house, Norfolk, also appeared in 1856.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Crimean War some Russian battle-ships visited the United States. One came to Norfolk, and the officers

¹ The Harpers had suffered a disastrous fire at their business premises.

² Some forty years later this house became the premises of the Virginia Club, but eventually was destroyed by fire.

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were entertained to dinner by G. P. R. James. His son states that he learned "some points about the famous submarine bomb shells at Sebastopol, which later rattled the British ships, when they approached that fortress, quite a little; but in communicating this information to H.B.M.'s Government, my father suppressed the name of the indiscreet Russian officer, who might soon have been in Siberia had his loquacity been reported."

Unhappily James's health was ever getting worse, as the following letter shows:

" British Consulate,
" Norfolk, Virginia.
" 7th April, 1855.

" My dear Ollier,

" It has been impossible for me to write to you, and it is now only possible for me to write a few lines as I have already had to do more than my benumbed and feeble hands could well accomplish. For ten weeks I was nailed to my chair with rheumatic gout in knees, feet, hips, hands, shoulder. For some time I could only sign my dispatches with my left hand and to some letters put my mark. Happily my feet, knees, etc., are well, but I cannot get the enemy out of my hands and arms. My shoulder is Sebastopol and will not yield.

" I enclose you a cheque upon the Housatonic Bank, Stockbridge, Massachusetts, as the only way I have of remitting you the money. Here, that cheque is better than any State Bank Note, but I am afraid neither the Housatonic Bank is well-known, nor Yours ever,

" G. P. R. JAMES."

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In this summer came the terrible epidemic of yellow fever, and, in his later report to the Government, James traced its origin to a Yankee vessel called the *Ben Franklin*. The captain of the ship had called upon James and wanted him to take charge of the effects of a sailor, who had died in the hospital, on the plea that the deceased was a British subject. "Did he die of yellow fever?" asked James. "Oh, no," replied the captain, "merely common ship fever" (typhus). The consul said he would inquire at the hospital, and his visitor—an unsuccessful disciple of George Washington, it seems—took a hurried departure. At the hospital, James was informed the sailor had entered his nationality as American in the book, and that the case was a virulent one of yellow fever, for the patient was dead in two hours. In spite of James's protestations, the port authorities allowed the *Ben Franklin* to remain for some time under inefficient quarantine regulations, and the result was the pestilence that devastated Norfolk and the surrounding places. Many friends of the Jameses died, including Mrs. and Miss Taney, wife and daughter of the Judge of that name, and Mrs. Barron, wife of Commodore Barron. Charles James says: "Her's was a horrible case. A frequent, though not invariable, symptom of yellow fever is hæmorrhage. In Mrs. Barron's case, it was stated that blood oozed from the pores of her face faster than it could be wiped away. As to the sweat of blood—that narrative about Jesus is among portions of Scripture which have been ridiculed, but apologists have shown similar things to occur in

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other cases of high nervous irritation, which is very characteristic of yellow fever. Our minister at Norfolk was named Jackson. He was a fine soldier-like looking man, a good elocutionist, a powerful pulpiteer, and, I must believe, a good Christian. He stood to his post of duty like a hero during the yellow fever epidemic of 1855, and died suddenly and painlessly among the last. My parents thought a great deal of him. Mrs. Taney and her daughter Alice died at Old Point Comfort, though there were not many cases there except among refugees from Norfolk, who tented upon the beach. The inhabitants eventually obtained a cannon, planted it on the pier, and would not let the boats from Norfolk approach. We saw the other Miss Taney at Baltimore in the following autumn. She had never been gay and pretty like her sister, and sorrow had made her quite nun-like. She gave my mother a very doleful book of devotions entitled *A Companion for the Sick Room.*"

Yellow fever is of African origin, and was brought to America with the imported slaves. The first symptoms resemble those of a bilious fever, and if the kidneys cease to act, and hæmorrhage and the "black vomit" supervene, the case is fatal. G. P. R. James conducted, at Lord Clarendon's request, an enquiry concerning the epidemic in Norfolk; and a doctor, who had examined many dead bodies, gave evidence that the chief seats of infection were the liver, gall, and spleen. The pestilence in Norfolk was presaged by a plague of peculiar flying insects, partly yellow in colour.

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Norfolk became a town of desolation and despair ; every one who could fled from the place, and the conditions were not unlike those that attended the Great Plague of London. James's second-in-command, Frederick Cridland (afterwards British Consul at Mobile and Charleston), was stopped one night by a sort of press-gang authorised to secure men for the purpose of burying the dead, and it was only by flaunting the majesty of the British Flag that he escaped this most unpleasant duty. After James had started for his annual leave, two of his negro servants had yellow fever—one of them, Kitty, an old woman previously mentioned,¹ dying very rapidly—and it was Cridland who himself disinfected the rooms of his chief. He remained in Norfolk till the epidemic had abated, and did his duty very finely.

The James family this summer travelled via Detroit and Chicago to Wisconsin and Minnesota, where the novelist and his eldest son, Walter, had invested in land. This was still a very primitive part of America. Charles James relates :

“ We ascended from a steamer from Fond du Lac, then a very pretty village trying hard to be a city, even into Menasha. We boarded uncomfortable weeks here at a damnably kept hotel. Menasha was a typical western village at the back of beyond. Though open on most sides to the prairies, it was also in close contiguity to the pineries. The principal business was lumbering. Neenah already showed signs

¹ See *ante*, page 180.

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of out-running Menasha (where my father and Walter had principally invested). Between them was Doty's Island, for aught I know the property of (territorial) Governor Doty, whose house appeared to be the only one there. Doty's Island was quite large. Trees were felled for lumber there: yet it seemed in the main a perfect wilderness. The house, huge and well-furnished, received us during a visit of some days' duration, and had a *rus in urbe* atmosphere about it quite delightful after the frontier tavern. The friendship, here cemented, endured.

"The climate seemed to me relaxing and depressing, and the barbarism of everything, except on Doty's Island, intolerable. The scenery, I thought, monotonous, except when there were plenty of swamps as around Lake Winnebago. About the only occupations were fishing and hunting. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, I had to own some beauties of the Great West. The long, long twilight of the prairies was very agreeable, and the cool nights. There were some really pretty places among the rising towns accessible by buggy-ride. Appleton, already distinguished as a seat of learning, was one of them. A few civilised people had begun to drift out into the West. There were lots of foreigners belonging to the cruder social grades, and very scantily supplied with English. And ever-lordly, as throughout the continent, there was the true American of that variety who could read *The Advocate* with time enough to spell the words, but knew all there was to know without. There was an old hunter, a

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patriarch in woodcraft. Where he lived and how, it is not for such as I to know, but I saw him a few times, clad in buck-skins, paddling the placid surface of the Lake Des Morts in a dugout whose primitiveness entirely defies description, and wearing a venerable growth of grey hair, whiskers, beard, and moustache, which made the existence of osseous or fleshy features a mere question for impertinent curiosity.

" We started at last from Menasha homewards on the Lake Winnebago steamer. Just about sunset I began to shiver. My father was much alarmed, for there was about a good deal of what they call here typhoid. He had almost overstayed his leave and was anxious to get on, but the doctors told him it would be at the risk of my life to move immediately, so he determined to hold back. After lying sick for some days at Fond du Lac, I was pronounced movable. The railroad terminus was at Wausau. To this place from Fond du Lac we had to stage it. The road has been described by Mrs. Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Recent rains had brought it to the highest state of perfection. Before we reached Wausau, darkness overtook us. Every few minutes the vehicle sunk over the hubs in a mud hole. At last it became so dark and the holes so fathomless that we concluded it dangerous to attempt proceeding, and stopped at a wayside house which frequently did duty for a tavern. . . . Henceforth we had the railroad, but I was too sick for even railroad travelling when we reached Milwaukee, and lay there for several days more. One of them was my ninth birthday, October 23rd, 1855. . . . When

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we left Detroit the slaughter recommenced. It was evening. A violent thunder-storm came on, and being bound in the same direction as ourselves, it accompanied us all along the Lakes with dazzling lightning, pouring rain, and reports like the bursting of cannon. As we crossed the suspension bridge at Niagara, my father saw what must have been the unique spectacle of the Falls revealed by lightning. He asked if I did, in a tone of such admiration that, not to disappoint him, I committed the departure from truth involved in saying 'Yes.' At the Niagara station we had to change cars just when the tempest was at its height. Down I came on the platform, dazed and reckless, the fever buzzing in my head, indifferent to thunderbolts. One of these terrific explosions instantly accompanying a blaze of light, which usually mark the parting of a great storm, almost availed to wake me up; and as we pulled out again the sky was light behind us. The lightning had struck the ugly factories on the American Fall; it burned them. Such a sacrilege as building things of that sort there would certainly avail to bring down fire from heaven.

"As a result of all this I was again laid by the heels at Albany. I remember the fine streets of the State capital. I also remember seeing the outside of the prison, Auburn, then infamous, as it should be now, for its barbarities. The superintendent in those days was noted for courage and executive ability. He built the penitentiary of Sing-Sing with convict labour, a thing never previously supposed possible. On one occasion he was told that the prison

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barber (a convict) had threatened his life. He went straight to the tonsorial parlour, and ordered the fellow to shave him. The man perceived he was found out, and obeyed like a spaniel. This superintendent believed in flogging, and the cruelty of his discipline caused agitation which resulted in abolishing this atrocity.

"On our journey home we made a short stay at Washington, where the British Minister insisted on my father staying to dine at his house, and extended his leave of absence, which was at its last moment, for the purpose. The Minister's name was Crampton¹; he looked an old man and was a bachelor. Afterwards he was fool enough to marry, and his wife got rid of him for a cause very conceivable, and married again. This lady's second husband was sent on some diplomatic business to the same Court where Crampton was then serving H.B.M."

Thus, after this not unexciting journey from the West, and short sojourns at Albany and Washington, the James family returned once more to Norfolk, where yellow fever had now fortunately abated. But as the disease had been actually in the Granby Street house, the consul established his family at Portsmouth, in the Macon House, a combination of inn and

¹ Sir John Crampton, K.C.B. (1805-1886). He was recalled in 1856 from Washington, where he had been the British Minister for four years, owing to his recruiting soldiers in America to fight with the British Army in the Crimean War. He married, in 1860, Victoire Balfe, the opera singer. She obtained a nullity divorce, and later became the wife of the Duke de Frias, a Spanish grandee. Crampton was then the British Minister at Madrid, 1864.

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boarding establishment. In the following year the consulate was removed to Richmond after strong representations that a more healthy situation than Norfolk was essential, and the date of the change is given in the following letter.

“ British Consulate, Norfolk, Va.

“ 3rd May, 1856.

“ My dear Mr. Kennedy,

“ . . . Lord Clarendon has ordered me to make every preparation for moving the Consulate of Virginia up to Richmond, but not to do so until he has nominated a Vice-Consul for Norfolk. He also wishes me to send him a detailed report regarding the late epidemic here ; and what between house hunting, office hunting, and trying to run down those foxes called rumours into their holes, and to draw truth up from the bottom of her well in a place where people are as fanatical upon contagion and non-contagion as if they were articles of faith, I have had no peace of my life. My book¹ I would have sent you, but I could not get a copy worth sending. It has found favour in the South and is powerfully abused in the North, both of which circumstances tend to increase the sale, so that it has been wonderfully well read.

“ I wish you a pleasant time in the old world, and have the pleasure of enclosing some letters, though you will hardly need any introduction anywhere. You carry your own with you. These are all I have time to write before you go ; but I will tell some others of my friends to find

¹ *The Old Dominion, or The Southampton Massacre*, published this year, 1856.

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you out and call upon you at your hotel. I am sorry I did not think of taking notes of all the evening conversations at Berkeley. We might have made out together some few from the *Noctes Berkelianæ*.

“Yours ever,

“G. P. R. JAMES.”

In a letter to Commander J. McKeever, a few weeks earlier, he alluded to his press of work and ill health :

“A completely new Code of Instructions were waiting my arrival from the West, and these Instructions have nearly doubled the former labours of a Consul, which were heavy enough before, so that I am quite overworked. I trust, however, in a few days to have finished the innumerable annual reports required at the end of each year, when my first gratification will be that of waiting upon you, although I have been so unwell ever since my return that I never should count upon health enough here to be certain of anything.”

James's health was now beyond repair. His constant tendency to lameness, the miseries of suppressed gout, the irregularity of his heart's action, all increased year by year. And now, during his first winter at Richmond, he suffered from the prevailing epidemic of diphtheria—a disease then but little understood by the medical profession—and soon after contracted inflammation of the lungs.

One of the first notable men to die from diphtheria was Preston S. Brooks, of South Carolina, nephew of Senator Butler, and the man who

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caned Charles Sumner during the commotions of the Slave Question. Brooks died suddenly at Charleston, and Charles James says "his death was attributed to membranous croup. We soon learned it was from the disease, then supposed new, which has obtained a terrific notoriety under the names of diphtheritis and diphtheria. It is said that Brooks was killed by his physician who insisted, against the patient's instincts, on surrounding his throat with powdered ice, which caused coagulation and death in a very short time. Before long diphtheria was epidemic in Richmond. When my father had it, his throat was cleared out repeatedly with lunar caustic which may have prevented suffocation, but can have done nothing to avert blood poisoning, the more specific cause of death. It was not, I think, until two years later that diphtheria crossed the ocean and excited great alarm in Europe. The principal epidemics were in particular towns. In England it was called Boulogne Sore Throat."

The season was exceptionally severe. Richmond was snowed up, there was difficulty in getting fuel, and so scarce were provisions that the negro population indulged largely in a diet of rats. James took an active part in organising measures of relief for the starving poor.

Although Richmond was a great improvement upon Norfolk in matters of health, wealth, and civilisation, possessed handsome Capitol Buildings and a theatre with a stock company (irradiated at times by passing meteors such as Edwin Forrest, in *Richelieu*, Avonia Jones from Australia, and the English actor Loraine), it was

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still in an elementary state. The population of 40,000 contained many wild elements, and disputes often ended in pistol fusillades in the streets, for Colt revolvers were commonly carried. There were public sales of negro slaves, fugitive and refractory blacks received severe floggings in the calaboose, and there was a Slave Warehouse—all in the style described by Mrs. Beecher Stowe in her rather too egregious romance. In James's time Richmond was still unconnected by train with Washington, and the journey had to be made by an inefficient, ill-smelling steam-boat service, over-crowded and ill-lit by whale-oil lamps, via the James and Potomac rivers to Acquia Creek. Thackeray came to lecture in Richmond early in 1853, and visited James (who was then still at Norfolk).

The James family lived at first at the Exchange Hotel, in Franklin Street, which was connected by a bridge across the street with a sort of annexe, called the Ballard House, after the name of its proprietors, two brothers. Charles James relates :

“ During this winter the bridge between the Ballard House and the Exchange House was built. There were curious things about the arrangements in this great double hotel. The water of the James river invariably stood in all the rooms in huge cut glass or painted china pitchers—red as that of the Nile in Moses's time and freshened with great chunks of ice.¹ The Southerners were much addicted to this sort of refreshment. Cold tea, tremendously

¹ This date, 1856, seems to mark the beginning of the American craze for ice water.

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iced and sugared, was seldom wanting at table, and indeed everything was iced. So far as water is concerned, iced water does not quench thirst, but after a few moments increases it. During the long hot season the insects were horrible. Of course mosquitoes 'took the cake,' but the flies were most disgusting. At the *table d'hôte* in the Exchange House there was a machine, the invention of a Yankee, consisting of a revolving cylinder daubed with molasses which was perpetually conducting the flies by thousands into a Tophet which burned them up.

" Just behind the Exchange Hotel a long and handsome structure called Drummond Bridge spanned the mighty torrent of the James river, connecting Richmond with the opposite suburb of Rockets. But the beauty of Drummond Bridge all disappeared when one went to it and saw the ineffable filthiness of the niggers covering the approaches and the arch itself. The whole river front, to which the ocean vessels came, was a scene of disgustingly low life. . . . Richmond, at this time, contained only about 40,000 inhabitants, but it was among the first cities in the South for wealth, beauty, and industrial importance. The Gallego Mills, whose flour was prized throughout Europe, were the most important institutions of the kind in America. The Tobacco Factories were, of course, among the first in the world. From a hill, to which we frequently walked, at the upper end of town, we looked down on Libby's warehouse, since so famous in another way. . . . A long street traversed the city from the hill over

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Libby's in the west to the opposite end. About half way it crossed a dirty little creek. Close to this stood the typical southern institution, a slave warehouse, enclosed by a spacious yard, whose high walls did not conceal the negroes. Some of the windows of the house were barred. One of the proprietors was an unmistakable Yankee named Snead. He was said to be very humane, but the business was regarded as infamous. I heard a respectable man denounced for accepting his hospitality, and the suppressed feelings of Nigger Jim and his compeers were free to vent in execration of the 'trader' and his 'jail.'

"The church where we used to go in Richmond was an historical place, erected on the site of the theatre which was burned in 1811. A monument under the arch preserves the names of the twenty odd persons who perished.

"Among our friends at Richmond was Mrs. Cora Mowatt (Ritchie), somewhat known as a novelist, who had been an actress. Ritchie, her husband, had a brother who fell a victim in one of the most desperate of southern duels. His adversary, Pleasants by name, also died, very soon after the encounter. He stated that he ran Ritchie twice through the body with a sword-cane. I remember Roger Pryor quite well. He got, in the North, the reputation of a very swaggering 'secesh,' on account of his altercation with John Parker Hale, of New Hampshire, whom he challenged. Hale, having the challenged party's privilege, chose bowie knives, and Pryor found a way of backing out. According to Mrs. Pryor, however, he was really not much of

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a type, and never owned slaves in his life. After the war he became a prominent New York lawyer, though at first his reputation as a rebel made it difficult for him to get practice there. Among our other acquaintance whom I remember well was the Governor, Wise, who remained in office until after the John Brown raid, and lived to be quite an active rebel.

"I remember becoming acquainted with John Thompson, editor of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, a monthly published at Richmond, and much extolled by the southerners generally, perhaps rather from patriotic than literary considerations. However, he had been in Europe, and was regarded by the little world of Richmond as an oracle. He certainly was a curly-haired dandy, but our opinion of his intellect was less worshipful. In the early days of the *Messenger*, E. A. Poe, who used to write for it, surprised him by a morning call and self-introduction.¹ Thompson (of course, in Virginia at that period) immediately proposed the flowing bowl. Poe said with languid indifference that he thought he could drink a little *real* French brandy. The bottle was produced, and the way Poe poured this potent beverage into his glass so alarmed Thompson that he ventured on a hint which he knew might sound inhospitable. 'Not at all,' said Poe, 'I have always observed that the way to drink genuine French brandy with impunity is to fill your glass nearly full, and

¹ It was in the summer of 1848 that Poe visited Richmond. He himself had been editor of *The Southern Literary Messenger* in 1835. Poe contributed to it, after meeting Thompson, until his death in 1849.

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then add just a drop of water.' He filled it so full that there wasn't room for more than a drop ; but when that had been added, to Thompson's consternation, he drank it all at one swallow. He sat down on the sofa and chatted for awhile ; but Thompson could not help watching him with some anxiety, and when he rose to go again ventured on saying something. ' If you mean the brandy,' said Poe, ' give yourself no trouble. I have had fourteen mint juleps this morning, and now I think I'll go to breakfast.'

"There was a young southern poet named Hope, who had lately published a volume of verse and of whom great expectations were entertained. He had a finely cut face. My father was pleased with his poems, particularly one on the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava ; and one evening, when we were entertaining a good many people, he asked Thompson to read it. This was the first time I ever saw and heard a man ' elocuting ' in full persuasion that he understood the art."

There was a curious cosmopolitan company in exile in Virginia, and several of its members were employed in educating young Charles James. An eccentric Neapolitan named Persicot, with ambrosial locks (which caused someone to observe that, like St. Paul, he dyed daily), taught drawing, and another Italian, named Callio, provided painting. A German gave instruction in fencing, and a Hungarian, who had taken part in Kossuth's Rebellion, was the artiste for riding. McErvy (presumably a Scotsman) was dancing master, and an excitable Frenchman named Grenier gave lessons in his own language.

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Grenier was a great admirer of G. P. R. James, and on one occasion when the novelist received an anonymous letter containing a threat to kill him the Frenchman exclaimed, "By God, if one did kill you, I would kill him!" When the Jameses went to Venice they left a quantity of their effects, including most of their books, in Grenier's charge. He got into financial difficulties, and everything was seized by his creditors, with the result that the Jameses lost their property. Grenier married a widow, Mrs. Ferguson. A Scotch oculist, named Turnbull, offered the eccentricity usual in Virginia at that date. Thus, Florence James calling when a patient was in the examining chair, Turnbull screamed out to her: "Miss James, come here! look at this! Such a lovely cataract in this young man's eye!" One of his stories of a compatriot concerned a Scotch minister who was dictating to the Almighty how to deal with a sinner for whose salvation he was solicitous: "Oh! Lord, tak him, tak him and shake him—shake him weel over hell-fire—but oh! Lord, dinna let him fa'!"

Another eccentric character was an old Mrs. Cabell, who presented Mrs. James with a book of her own composition, comprising a narrative of a European tour and sketches of people she had met (including Madame de Genlis).

In the summer of 1856 the James family moved out to Montgomery Springs, a beautiful place among the mountains. Beyond the hotel grounds, originally forest, rose the steep mountains covered with nut-trees and bush. From the nearest railway station a single car made the

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journey without an engine, for it descended by the law of gravitation, although the gradient was not very apparent. An engine was used to convey the car back.

It was before James joined his family at Montgomery Springs that he penned the following letter to his small son, Charles :

“ Exchange Hotel,

“ Richmond, Va.

“ July 5th, 1856.

“ My dearest Charlie,

“ I have received your nice letter and am very much obliged to you for it. It is a great satisfaction to me that you are pleased with the Montgomery Springs, and I trust all of you will derive great benefit from the fresh air of the hills. The Fourth of July passed over here more quietly than usual, but still it was very hot and noisy. . .

“ I feel rather lonely without anyone with me, and like to hear often.

“ The battle at which Warwick was killed was the Battle of Barnet, and, if I remember right, it took place on Easter Day. . . .

“ Tell Mama that one of the chimneys of our house has parted from the building, and is likely to fall upon the new house next door, so it is lucky we are not in it. . . .

“ Lyon is quite well and sends his best regards. He is beginning to bark at whatever comes into the yard, and is now so padlocked to his kennel that nobody can steal him again without having a cart to carry away the kennel too. In order that he may have room to run, a new

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and longer chain has been bought for him by

“ Your affectionate father,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

Later in the summer James went out to his family at Montgomery Springs, where they adopted the southern practice of living in a rustic cabin and merely going to an hotel for meals. It was a primitive country, surrounded by woodland, and just then the neighbourhood was indulging in one of its frequent scares of a negro insurrection, which was regarded so seriously that even little Charles James was armed with a pistol. In the autumn the family proceeded on a tour through Western Virginia, visiting the Otter Peaks, Lexington, and Liberty, from thence returning to Richmond late in November. Charles James relates an incident, which occurred at Lexington, illustrative of the summary manner in which the Americans of the Fifties settled their quarrels.

“ Christian and Blackburn had quarrelled about a girl. It was Sunday evening, and the fight, which had been long pending, began at the church door, under a lofty hill. . . . They went up the hill, sparring with fists, Blackburn driving Christian, who had the advantage of the ground, before him. At the top of the hill, Blackburn, who was now on his own level, knocked him down, and piled on to him. After bidding him get off once or twice, Christian stabbed him in the neck with a knife. There were third parties present when the fight began, but none of them seemed to think they ought to interfere with the gentlemen who went off and

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cut each other's throats in satisfactory privacy." Christian, when tried for this murder, was acquitted.

The following summer, 1857, was spent at Ashland. Here there was a big hotel connected with the railway station and post office, and within the ring fence a number of cabins where many of the hotel visitors preferred to sleep. Ashland was then in a growing state, and Charles James states there were some good squares being made with cabins all round for the accommodation of the festive parties continually arriving from Richmond. Although situated on one of the *slashes* or swamps of Virginia, the place seems to have been healthy, and the rich alluvial soil, heavy with water, overlaid flat rocks. Ashland possessed a slave market, with a sale every week; the negroes were often chained together, and their destination generally New Orleans. "The name of our landlord at that tavern was Thompson. There were three boys at Ashland then whose names have been heard widely since. The landlord's son is now Edgar Thompson, the millionaire iron manufacturer. The second is known by reputation wherever there are anarchists, and that has come to be all over the civilised world. The third boy was Booker Washington."

On returning to Richmond, the Jameses moved into their new house near the Capitol grounds, where, however, they were destined to remain but a short time.

During this season, James, as British Consul, took part in the unveiling of the bronze equestrian statue¹ of George Washington in Richmond,

¹ Designed by Crawford (father of Marion Crawford).

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and at night had the front of his house adorned with an arch of gas jets, which in those days was considered a very gorgeous mode of illumination. There was also a banquet, when the French Consul, M. Poole, after painfully composing beforehand a speech in praise of Washington in his limited English, was called upon to respond to the toast of France!

In 1857 James published *Leonora D'Orco*, a romance of Italy in the fifteenth century. In 1858 appeared *Lord Montagu's Page*; a sequel to this work was published in America in 1859 under the title of *The Cavalier*, and it was reissued in London as *Bernard Marsh* in 1864, four years after the author's death.

G. P. R. James had long desired a change of consulate and urged his claims to promotion. In 1858 he was offered the post of Consul-General for the Black Sea with headquarters at Odessa. While he was considering this proposal there came the offer of the similar post for the Adriatic, with residence at Venice, and this he at once accepted. As soon as the news of his impending departure became known in Virginia, regret was expressed on all sides; and the impulsive, warm-hearted southerners—former feuds on the Slave Question all forgotten—were profuse with compliments and hospitalities. They presented James with a punch-bowl at a farewell banquet in Richmond, when the following gracefully complimentary verses by John R. Thompson, the Virginian poet, were read¹:

¹ They were published shortly after in *The Southern Literary Messenger*.

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Good-bye! they say the time is up—

“The Solitary Horseman” leaves us,
We’d like to take a “stirrup cup,”

Though much indeed the parting grieves us :
We’d like to hear the glasses clink

Around a board where none was tipsy,
And with a hearty greeting drink

This toast—The Author of *The Gipsy*!

The maidens fair of many a clime

Have blubbered o’er his tearful pages,

The Ariosto of his time,

Romancist of the Middle Ages :

In fiction’s realm a shining star

(We own ourselves his grateful debtors) :

Who would not call our G. P. R.—

H.B.M.C.—a “Man of Letters”?

But not with us his pen avails

To win our hearts—this English scion,

Though there are not so many tales

To every roaring British Lion—

For he has yet a prouder claim

To praise, than dukes and lords inherit,

Or wealth can give, or lettered fame—

His honest heart and modest merit.

An Englishman, whose sense of right

Comes down from glorious Magna Charta,

He loves, and loves with all his might,

His home, his Queen, Pale Ale, the Garter ;

The last embraces much, ’tis best

To comprehend just what is stated—

For Honi soit—you know the rest

And need not have the French translated.

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O! empty bauble of renown,
So quickly lost and won so dearly,
Our Consul wears the Muses' crown,¹
We love him for his virtues merely;
A Prince, he's ours as much as Fame's,
And reigns in friendship kindly o'er us,
Then call him George Prince Regent James,
And let his country swell the chorus.

His country! we would gladly pledge
Its living greatness and its glory—
In Peace admired, and "on the edge
Of battle" terrible in story:
A little isle, its cliff it rears
'Gainst wind and waves in wrath united,
And nobly for a thousand years
Has kept the fire of freedom lighted.

A glowing spark in time there came,
Like sunrise o'er the angry water,
And here is fed, an altar flame,
By Britain's democratic daughter—
From land to land a kindred fire
Beneath the billow now is burning,
O! may it thrill the magic wire¹
With only love and love returning!

But since we cannot meet again
Where wine and wit are freely flowing,
Old friend! this measure take and drain
A brimming health to us in going:

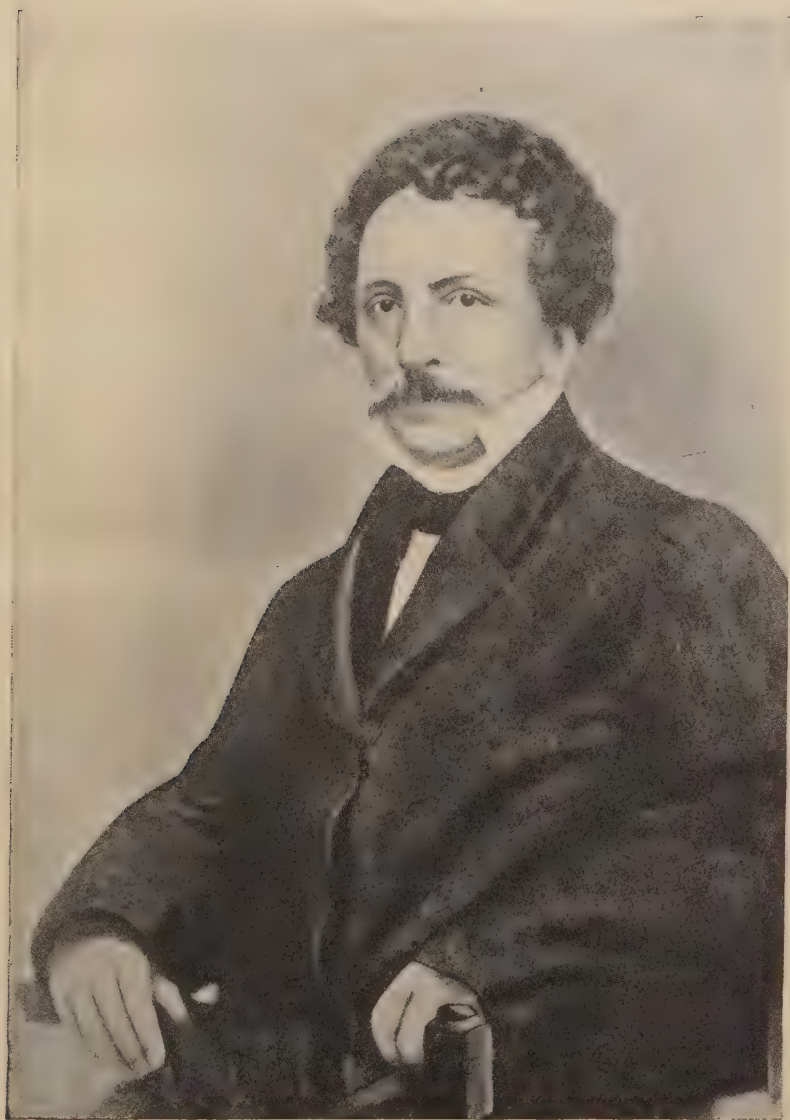
¹ The Atlantic Telegraph Cable had just recently, August, 1858, been successfully inaugurated.

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And far-beneath Italia's sky,
Where sunsets glow with hues prismatic,—
Bring out the bowl when you are dry
And pledge us by the Adriatic!

James thus left America with the kindest feelings. Maunsell B. Field states :

" I was with him during the last evening that he spent in America, at the Union Place Hotel, in New York. Washington Irving, between whom and himself there existed a sincere friendship, was also with us. Mr. James was telling about all the kindness which he had received in Virginia. ' They're a warm-hearted people—they're a warm-hearted people,' he said, while tears came into his eyes. The next morning I accompanied him to the steamer, and took my final leave of him. . . He was a big-hearted man, too-tender, merciful, and full of religious sentiment ; a good husband, a devoted father, and a fast friend."



G. P. R. JAMES.

The Last Portrait, 1858.

Block by courtesy of Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton.

[Facing page 214.]

CHAPTER VII

The Last Voyage Home

SO it came to pass that after eight adventurous years in America, James and his family left the New World for its extreme antithesis—Venice, where the novelist was destined to end his many journeyings less than two years later. Even as he set out upon his last adventure his health was in a precarious condition, and he suffered further from the effects of a heavy fall during the journey to New York. Charles James relates :

“ Our journey seemed marked with ill luck from the first. My father’s health was visibly bad. At some city, where we had stopped, he had gone off the train first, as was his practice, and was standing with one foot on the car platform to help my mother down, when the engine made a spasmodic movement, and he not only fell but rolled in a way which must have seemed ludicrous to anyone who did not realise the possible consequences—his stove-pipe beaver hat and big cane going in different directions. My mother went almost into hysterics ; he actually went down under the staging and had been a good deal hurt. His last portrait was photographed by Brady, in New York, at this time. The Fields and the rest of our old

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acquaintances at New York were very attentive. Peter Cooper already appeared quite a venerable man, short in stature, and I should have said feeble in body, though he lived to be a Greenback candidate for President eighteen years afterwards. He built the first railroad in America.

“ We embarked on the steamer *Persia*, of the Cunard Line, then one of the largest afloat. Captain Judkins, a celebrated navigator, was commander. He was a big sailor, noted for the rudeness of his manners ; but his disposition was really benevolent, and we all came to like him. He had been in the Crimea during the war. I remember going out to the *Persia* on a little tug ; the scene of weighing anchor ; the British flag hoisted on the taffrail ; the gun which proclaimed we were off ; and the steaming out of the harbour between Fort Lafayette and the other defences where the Statue of Liberty is now.

“ Sometime before we began our journey we knew that there was a comet which we were likely to see over the Atlantic, for it had been distinctly visible to the naked eye while we were en route to New York. It was now almost at its greatest splendour, increasing every night. It extended across 60 degrees, that is a third way across the visible heavens ; and its proper motion, perfectly distinct from that of the stars, did certainly make it a portentous looking as well as a most brilliant object. I no longer wondered that our ancestors were afraid of large comets as of possible danger, and also as omens. My father and mother both said

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that this comet (Donati's)¹ was nothing to the one of 1811. My father saw that comet when he had been with his father in Scotland and came back by sea. During the voyage they were driven over to Norway, where he saw some of the bread partly made of ground-up fine bark, which used to be eaten there then. Fortunately, as it proved, they took on board a company of soldiers. One night a French privateer attacked them. My father, awakened by the firing, came on deck and saw the sea-fight beneath the light of the moon and the comet of 1811. As he emerged from the hatches a cannon ball whizzed overhead, and made him stoop, but

¹ Donati's Comet of 1858 was undoubtedly a most awe-inspiring apparition. One of the few surviving persons who saw it, Mr. Alfred Rosling Bennett, records in his *London and Londoners in the Eighteen Fifties and Sixties*: "The comet grew bigger and brighter evening after evening as the autumn advanced until, from a scarcely noticeable star, it stretched across the heavens like a threatening fiery sword. Silent, flaring, menacing, mysterious, it made its nightly run, to the terror of many, the admiration of all. . . I have seen it stated in print that subsequent comets nearly approached Donati's in size and brightness. . . . The comets of 1861, 1874, 1880, 1881, 1882, all of which I saw, lumped together would not have rivalled Donati's. Looking back, I feel no astonishment at the consternation this superlative phenomenon caused, or amazement that the people were apt to connect it with some impending disaster of colossal magnitude." This comet was discovered by Donati at Florence on June 2nd, 1858, and a coastguard man in the Isle of Sheppey perceived it in early September. Soon after it rapidly became bigger and brighter, and was at its finest as a spectacle in the first week of October, just at the time the James family crossed the Atlantic. It proved to be an omen of ill to poor G. P. R. James.

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his father put his hand on his shoulder, saying, 'Don't duck, my boy; every bullet has its billet; never duck!' The privateer came alongside, and offered to throw out her grappling irons; but the soldiers, whom she had not expected to meet, poured a volley into her, and made her sheer off in a hurry.¹

"Off Newfoundland I imagine it is always storms or fogs. This time it chose to storm, and rough weather pursued us all through the 'stormy forties,' where the direct route across the ocean is. Even before the tempest began, I remarked the increase in the size of the waves as we got further out. It was dizzying to see how the bow and stern alternately shot upwards towards the sky and plunged down into the abyss. When it began to blow, I soon had to take refuge in my berth, and remained there several days. On the worst night, my father told me, the great waves driven by a head-wind went over the deck beyond the second smoke-stack. The vessel, thus buried in the water, shook with the effort which it cost her to emerge, and even to my father the situation appeared terrifying, for he was not used to the modern style of ocean steamers, which are made long and low on purpose to cut through the waves instead of pitching over them. The ship rolled as well as pitched, throwing down the glasses and other table utensils, which were set in racks overhead along the dinner saloon, and doing lots of breakage. The menu and furniture on these great ocean liners are worthy of a first-class hotel, nevertheless there are, or

¹ See *ante*, page 34.

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were then, inconveniences enough. The Cunard Line would not spend as much on decorations as the ill-fated Collins, saying they could not afford to do that and provide, to their satisfaction, for safety also—they were reputed never to have lost a vessel. Accordingly there were plenty of arrangements for comfort, but beauty was not much consulted. The saloons were dark; their seats were iron benches padded with cushions of red velveteen, to which one stuck. Space was always scanty, but the sense of imprisonment reached its height in those cubbies called 'state-rooms,' with their beds in tiers, like the shelves of dry-goods stores. These dens were lighted with dim whale-oil lamps enclosed in boxes which the passengers could not open, and with round windows about the size of a cannon ball, and having glass thick enough to exclude the blow of a wave: consequently there was no considerable vision. Through these, however, I could see the liquid mountains, rolling high above the vessel's sides, and observed what I always thought an extremely dismal effect—the grey rain spotting their green surfaces. At one time whales were said to be visible, but I never could see them. I remember our passing the other Cunard steamer, *Arabia*, on her way to the United States. Another time a little land bird lit on the shrouds and was about the ship for some considerable time before it flew away.

“Our voyage of ten days was rapid for fifty¹ years ago. At last one night I heard that land had been seen, and next morning the green

¹ Now sixty-eight years ago.

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Irish hills lay at our north. We passed the new harbour of Cork, but did not enter it. The following day found us anchored at Liverpool in the dismalest shroud of black cloud and rain which England could provide. The city appeared enormous and horribly smoky. Within our first hour at the hotel I saw such a queer black object pass the windows, and with a sort of horror we found it to be the plumes of a hearse.¹ We were lowered from the *Persia* by a head-turning ladder into another nasty little tug which took us ashore. Aunt Sophy and her husband, Uncle Leigh (Captain H. R. Thomas, a cousin of her's) were on the wharf to meet us. Their house, Bryn Elwy, at St. Asaph, in Flintshire, was not more than twenty-five miles from Liverpool.

"We went by rail to London, accompanied by an American family named Satterlee, with whom we had become acquainted on the sea. The rain continued. As the cattle do not run, American fashion, in Europe, the locomotives have no use for cow-catchers—an American invention. I have witnessed horrible scenes at Stockbridge, Ashland, etc., when a train sometimes reduced a calf to jelly. My father was once on a train when the cow-catcher took up a hand-car with six niggers and carried them for miles.

"My parents noticed as a novelty in England the practice of placarding the railroad stations with sheets giving the gist of advertising newspapers. On one of these we read of the death

¹ The superstitious will regard this as a second omen of ill for G. P. R. James.

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of Lord Charles Wellesley,¹ younger son of the Waterloo Duke of Wellington.. I called my father's attention to the placard. He had been well acquainted with him, and was much shocked. Wellesley's end was sad. He had, as my father knew, been blind for some time, but the cause was sclerosis (hardening) of the brain. The loss of other friends, whom I did not know, contributed also to the melancholy of my father's return.

"We must have stayed at my aunt Isabella's house in London, 25, Hanover Square, the place I had often heard my father speak of. Aunt Isabella's husband, Mr. Hutchins, a famous dentist, had grown rich by this calling. I remember a visit from a certain Mr. Fowler, an old bachelor, whose profession, if he had one, was that of an artist. I infer that he was a character not uncommon in England—a helpless sort of man, made so by possessing a small independent income, and that he only played at painting. But he was very good-natured, and a favourite with children. He took me to several places, among them the Alhambra, a great vaudeville theatre, where the gymnast Leotard,² fearful

¹ Lord Charles Wellesley, who died on October 9th, 1858, was a Major-General, and father of the present and fourth Duke of Wellington (born in 1849).

² The Alhambra, built in 1854 and originally called the Panopticon, was converted into a music hall by E. T. Smith. It was occupied by Howe's and Cushing's American Circus in 1858. Leotard did not appear until 1861, so it must have been a few years later that his aerial performance was seen by Charles James as a school-boy on holiday from Cheltenham or Brighton. Leotard received the then enormous salary of £180 a week. He died of small-pox when still quite young.

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as it looked to me, though not very difficult, leaped from one trapeze to another.

"From the windows of 25, Hanover Square I used to forecast the approach of evening by sight of the scarlet women coming out of Hanover Square through Tenterden Street, which was occupied with lodgings for single gentlemen. My aunt told me some stories of scandal about it which had better be suppressed.

"Highgate and Hampstead were then still country towns. Regent and Oxford Streets were the two finest commercial thoroughfares: their crossing at the Circus is the most crowded I ever saw anywhere. It is no unusual circumstance to have to wait fifteen minutes for a chance to get over on foot. The Quadrant was full of fashionable 'Hells.' At this time Temple Bar (now removed) was the last relic of the ancient fortifications of the City except the Tower. I have heard my father tell that he had seen the heads of some conspirators on spikes over the arch—probably the last example of this barbarous practice.¹ My mother said that, from the river, she had seen men left hanging in chains at a place called Erith. Throughout the older parts of London, including Hanover Square, houses were fronted by huge extinguishers for the torches (links) by which people used to be lighted about. The whale-oil

¹ The last heads exposed on Temple Bar were those of the Jacobites, Towneley and Fletcher, executed in 1746. They were blown down in 1772, but the spikes on which the heads had been impaled remained on Temple Bar until the early years of the nineteenth century. It was doubtless these spikes that G. P. R. James said he had seen in his childhood.

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lamp was not obsolete in my time; it was actually in use at the Horse Guards' barracks in Whitehall. The modern police were in evidence before 1858, but their cant names, 'Bobbies' and 'Peelers,' remind us that they were organised by Sir Robert Peel and have not existed long. My father and Uncle Leigh used to tell of the old-fashioned 'Charleys'—how the fast young men were always fighting them; how they went to sleep in their sentry-boxes, and how the best joke of all was to turn the box round and set the slumbering 'Charley' with his face to the wall. Another recent innovation was the Corps of Commissionaires (soldiers from the Crimean War), who carried messages and parcels and were displacing the unorganised 'ticket-porters' like Dickens's Trotty Veck."

The changes that G. P. R. James found in the London of 1858 during his last visit to his native city were indeed amazing. The days of his youth in London had been those of the heavily-splendid Regency, when there was great moral laxity (as is ever the case during or just after a long war); the immoralities of the Prince of Wales and his brothers were known to everyone and a general topic of light conversation; the Princess of Wales, after charges of immorality had been considered in 1806, was formally brought to trial on an accusation of adultery in 1820: when James returned to London in 1858 he found the Court and Society encased in corsets of apparently impregnable virtue; Queen Victoria at the acme of her matrimonial beatitude and almost annual

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maternity ; and domesticity and respectability and a large family the aims of every citizen. The same with clothes. As a child, playing in Kensington Gardens, James may quite likely have seen Madame Récamier when she gave the startled English their first glimpse of the *mode à l'antique* with her scanty muslin gown clinging to her figure. As his own friend, Byron, put it in 1808 :

“ Now round the room the circling dow’gers
sweep,
Now in loose waltz the thin-clad daughters
leap . . .
The last display the free, unfettered limb.”

When James returned in 1858 he found all womankind clothed in many petticoats under voluminous full skirts and the first graceful and flowing form of the crinoline. In his youth, London knew only horse traffic and every gentleman rode his nag or mare : when he returned in 1858 London had the great railway termini, and there was already talk of the Underground Railway, which duly came to pass four years later.

Undoubtedly G. P. R. James, during his last visit to London, remembered and longed for the old gay days of his youth which he had described in *My Aunt Pontypool* and *A Whim and its Consequences*. Blameless and moral as his own life had been, his father’s patron and patient, the Prince Regent, was yet a greater figure to him than the Prince Consort ; and his boyhood’s friend, Byron, fulfilled every conception of what a romantic poet should be in a way the Tennyson of 1858 could never rival.

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Unlike Thackeray, who regarded the female dresses and military uniforms of 1815 as absurd and hideous, James, with the flair of a costume-romance writer, was able to realise in retrospect how picturesque and historical had been his environment in youth. And who shall say he was wrong? Surely the year 1814 to 1815, for example, can claim to be one of the most vivid and momentous in English annals. That wonderful June of 1814, when the victorious and Allied Sovereigns, with Blucher and Platoff, visited the Prince Regent, and London was *en grande tenue*, a brilliant Cosmopolis. And who can read without emotion of how the news of Waterloo reached London—a postchaise with four reeking horses, and out of the windows hanging the two captured French Eagles of the Imperial Guard, dashes into St. James's Square attended by a vociferous mob of people. An officer springs from the chaise, and enters No. 14—now 16—where the Prince Regent is dining with Mrs. Boehm. All dusty and battle-stained, Major Percy drops on one knee before the Prince and lays the flags at his feet with the words, "Victory, Sir, Victory!" But the reading of the despatches causes the Prince Regent to burst into tears, for as he says, "It is a glorious victory, but the loss of life has been fearful, and *I* have lost many friends." The brilliant company breaks up, and great ladies rush away on foot, without waiting for their carriages, to spread the news. And again, anyone walking up Albemarle Street on a spring morning of this same year might have seen Walter Scott and Byron entering No. 50 for their talks in Mr. Murray's drawing-room.

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Such were the events that G. P. R. James's mind went back to during his last few years of life. When in America, the Harpers relate that his conversation was a mine of anecdote of the great men he had known in his youth. Maunsell B. Field, who heard some of these stories told by James in the Harpers' shop, realised their interest, and he used to induce James to retell them again over his fireside, when the anecdotes were taken down by an amanuensis. Thus it came about that these reminiscences were published in *Harper's Magazine*—under the rather misleading title of *The Bride of Landeck*. The idea was that of a garrulous old man in his anecdotage who set out to tell a tale with this title, but he digressed continually, every chance allusion leading him to relate an anecdote of some famous person and his own memories of the past. Consequently, it is only at the very end that the story of *The Bride of Landeck* is told. The recollections in this work of Scott at Abbotsford are worthy of preservation, for undoubtedly they are based on G. P. R. James's personal knowledge of Scott and his visits to Abbotsford when he himself was living in the neighbourhood, at Maxpoffle, in 1831.¹ It is indicated that James, who is alluded to in the third person, rode over the hills to Abbotsford, and at his heels, gambolling and yelping, were eleven dogs of every size and description. These canine visitors would not be objected to by Scott, for James proceeds to relate :

“Sir Walter's love of dogs was carried to the most extraordinary pitch, and had all the

¹ See *ante*, page 58.

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blindness of a passion. He could not believe any ill of the 'tykes,' as he called them, and was full of anecdotes of their virtues and high qualities. He went so far as to deny that there was such a thing as canine madness, and said that it was a libel on the best of God's creatures. The two staghounds, which were his constant companions, were very pertinacious in their quarrels. . . . Not being allowed to fight in the drawing-room, they used to go regularly forth into the woods to settle their differences, or, as Sir Walter called it, 'To void their quarrel by the duello'; and would return half torn to pieces by each other's teeth.

"In our walks and drives I remarked that everything that was beautiful and picturesque caught his attention in an instant. Sir Walter, stumping along, supported by a stout stick . . . had a plain Scotch bonnet on his head, and a gray shepherd's maade or plaid round his broad shoulders, and, when not excited, he looked with his somewhat heavy features, and white overhanging eyebrows, like a good, stout, portly farmer.

"I shall never forget that visit to Abbotsford. . . . At one time or another, during the week I remained there, we had Wordsworth, the poet; John Lockhart, the critic and novelist; James, the romance writer and historian; and Carne,¹ the author of *Letters from the East*. The first-named I cannot say I was very agreeably impressed by . . . his great delight seemed to be to roam about the house . . . repeating his own poetry, somewhat to the discomfort of the

¹ John Carne (1789-1844). Travelled in the East 1821.

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thoughts and conversations of others.¹ Lockhart was a very striking personage, marvellously handsome, and somewhat taciturn. But whatever he did say possessed terseness and point, not without grace and rarely without bitterness. James was anything but that which one is inclined to fancy him from his works. Some saw a likeness between him and Lockhart; but I could not perceive the slightest resemblance, except, perhaps, in complexion; for he is a much shorter man, and his features altogether want that fine and delicate cutting which gives to Lockhart's head the look of an antique gem. They seemed great friends.

"No, I shall never forget that week at Abbotsford. Everything, even the most material in character, seemed to strike something new and sparkling from the minds of the persons there assembled; an epigram from Lockhart, a piece of poetry from Sir Walter, or an anecdote from James. . . . James contended that the word haggis was a mere corruption of the French word *hachis*; and Sir Walter stoutly defended the Scottish origin of the word; while Lockhart asked his friend if he would devise 'cocky-leaky' from *coq à laquais*."

On one occasion, James asked Scott why he had chosen to preserve for a long period the mystery of the anonymous authorship of the Waverley Novels. Sir Walter replied that the idea of secrecy arose partly from caprice, partly from policy: "I didna like, my friend, to

¹ Wordsworth was last at Abbotsford in September, 1831. The poems to which James so sacrilegiously adverts were probably those of *Yarrow Revisited*.

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spoil a tolerable reputation for writing bad poetry by gaining another for writing worse prose, and I took all the precautions imaginable to guard against the discovery." He added that eleven persons knew his secret, and not one betrayed him. "I restricted it to that number," he said, "for I was sure if I had made it twelve there would have been a Judas among them."

After the authorship had been acknowledged, Sir Walter received, of course, numerous letters from his readers. One man asked him what authority he had, when writing *The Talisman*, for giving Richard Cœur-de-Lion so near a female relative as the Lady Edith. "Deil's in the man," observed Scott to James, "as if a professional liar could be called upon to give a reason for an auld sang."

One more story from Scotland as told by G. P. R. James. In Edinburgh lived old Lady C. G. She was very parsimonious and very deaf. At a large supper party she gave, her butler shouted in broad Scotch to his mistress: "Press your guests to take the jeelies, my Leddy: they'll no keep; they're getting mouldy." "Shave them, John, shave them," replied Lady C. G. in a solemn tone. "They've been shaved already, my Leddy," bawled John, to the consternation of the guests.

Exactly a year later, after the visit to Abbotsford described by James, Sir Walter Scott died there on September 21st, 1832¹—after those last few weeks of life so poignantly depicted by Lockhart in his great biography. To that

¹ Wordsworth had arrived at Abbotsford on September 21st, 1831.

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biography G. P. R. James contributed the recollections of his aunt, Mrs. Churnside, of Scott as a school-boy. Lockhart states :

“ Her nephew, Mr. James (the accomplished author of *Richelieu*), to whose friendship I owe her communication, assures me too that he had constantly heard her tell the same things in the very same way, as far back as his memory reaches, many years before he had ever seen Sir Walter.”

As Mrs. Churnside truly said of Scott, “ Having once known him, it was impossible ever to forget him. . . . After all the changes of a long life, he constantly appears as fresh as yesterday to my mind’s eye.” So it was, too, with G. P. R. James, who never forgot that kind and distinguished friend who many years before had so greatly assisted his first steps up the ladder of literary success.

One of G. P. R. James’s last engagements in his home country was to lunch with Charles Dickens (so Miss Georgina Hogarth told the present writer), and in October, 1858, he left England for ever.

CHAPTER VIII

The British Consul in Venice

THE Jameses, accompanied by Mr. Frederick Cridland (who resigned his consular duties in Virginia to assist G. P. R. James at Venice in a similar capacity), stayed a few days in Paris, and then travelled via Susa and Milan to Venice, when, as the new consul observed, "it seemed strange to enter the City of the Sea by railroad," for, of course, there was none when he had visited Venice in 1834.

The Jameses took up their temporary abode in the *Albergo dell' Europa*—formerly the *Palazza Loredano*—under rather depressing conditions, for Venice celebrated their arrival with fog and one of her rare snow-storms ; the Rialto, swathed in mist, with snow falling from a lead-coloured sky, presented but a dismal picture. But there was no lack of excitement in Venice, for James—fated through life to experience adventure—arrived when the city was seething with unrest, arising from racial quarrels which culminated the following year, 1859, in the war between Italy and Austria. The English colony in Venice had its own little feuds and hatreds, and James soon found he had an enemy who desired to supplant him in the office of British Consul ; to further his own ends, this man misrepresented James's actions to the Government at home and

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brought upon his rival's head some disagreeable and irritating despatches from the Foreign Office.

Charles James gives an amusing account of his and his family's experiences in Venice and of their acquaintances, English and foreign, there :

“ We did not remain long at the hotel, and before the Christmas holidays we were keeping house at the Palazza Foscolo, exactly opposite the church of Santa Maria della Salute. Pretty much all the palaces of the decayed Venetian nobility are let out to contractors, mostly Jews, who sublet them in furnished flats. At the Palazza Foscolo we had a floor and a basement, the latter containing my father's consular office. The contractors from whom we rented were two Jews, by name Levi and Babasi. Levi was long, lank, and red-nosed ; Babasi was fat, and thereby hangs a tale. In the basement of the Palazza Foscolo I first beheld a gas stove. It had eight internal burners. Babasi, exhibiting it with pride, but without judgment, turned all the eight jets on, one by one, and then applied a match. By that time the gas had mixed well with the oxygen of the air, and the result was an explosion. The stove sent forth a volley of flame, with a bang like a cannon, and Babasi fell on his back, presenting the exact appearance of a reversed turtle. The gas stove was never lighted again during our occupancy of the premises : I could have wished devoutly, however, that something which would keep the house warm had been. The Venetian winter is as disagreeable as that of Wisconsin, though it only snows about twice. One cause of discomfort is the marble floors, which no amount

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of straw and carpet will keep from being cold. Another is lack of appliances for heating. The old Venetians had no stoves, and, except in their kitchens, perhaps no fireplaces. Their portraits represent them rolled up in furs, warming their hands with chafing dishes, and looking blue enough.

“ There were lots of Hungarian soldiers at Venice, and we knew many of the officers. It was very awkward for us, foreigners—with the head of the family holding an official position and bound to observe neutrality as well as sociability—to be in a place so full of faction. No one could blame the Italians for being violently revolutionary, so far as Austrian tyranny was concerned ; but their ways of showing it were ridiculous. Almost every hour witnessed some sort of demonstration. To wear Italian colours—white, red, and green—or *even one or two of them*, was to stand a fair chance of being arrested ; and to show those of Austria (black and yellow) was to be mobbed. One English family, who had soon found out that Italians would not come to the same dinner or ball with Austrians, took to inviting them on alternate days (this everlasting reception of guests is observed by all the rich and moderately rich in Venice, a city where living is cheap). Very soon they received from someone a curt response that Italians could not go one day where Austrians went the previous day. Then the war came ; martial law was proclaimed ; and shooting a disaffected citizen was no more than shooting a dog. It may be supposed such things had a depressing effect on the social life even of so

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gay a city as Venice. Half the time the theatres were not playing ; the Carnival which I saw (Christmas, 1858) was but a poor show, and next year there was none.

" I did not find the world-famous Carnival of Venice a very impressive sight. Their masks for the most part were the commonest paste-board monstrosities. Ladies sometimes wore character costumes, as at any masked ball, and very often domino (a plain dress and mask all of one colour) ; the men got themselves up on Guy Fawkes principles—the more ugly and absurd the better. Of course, the Piazza and Piazzetta, blazing with gas, lined with their world-famous cafés, swarming with pretty flower-girls of easy morals, were a fine sight, which was assisted by the air full of music and the gondolas decorated with Chinese lanterns—even in retired canals. The practice of pelting with confetti (real sugar-plums) was generally observed. The masques considered it a privilege of the season to raid people's houses and receive a collation. A party fell on us. My father, knowing that people of the worst adventurer class avail themselves of the privilege, was not, I believe, very cordial. It is a capital element of the naughtiness—and the fun—that you cannot tell without diplomatic investigation whether the individual who fastens on you is a countess, an actress, or a street-walker.¹

¹ At a costume ball at the Fenice Theatre, Venice, in 1926, masks had to be removed by order of the Dictator, Mussolini, on the plea that the Crown Prince of Italy might be assassinated ! So, presumably, the original home of Masked Balls will see them no more.

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“ Weddings and funerals are as spectacular in Venice as elsewhere. The latter present strange features to the northern eye. 'About half the dead are deposited, like Juliet, in the pigeon-holes of a subterranean vault, and carried thither upon open biers. Many go to their last rest in topless gondolas. The ugliness of coffin and blackness is avoided; the tawdriness of flowers, of candles and bell preceding the Host and crucifix is correspondingly pronounced. Except during the silence of Holy Week, when the watchman grinds the hours on a rattle, almost every one of the innumerable churches' bells rings the quarter hour; no two keep the same time, so the jangle is incessant. I have seen two Holy Weeks in Venice, and one really misses the uproar. Any day, at any time, you may hear the tinkling of a little bell and see people falling on their knees in the Calle, while gondoliers stop and kneel in their boats upon the canal.

“ New Year's Day is the recognised harvest of beggars, and every boy you meet has a dish for pennies, which he calls on you to replenish in the name of *nouvo anno*. Among other days observed in Venice, I remember Ash Wednesday, when everybody goes to church, and has a cross made on his brow with cinders from the finger-end of a priest continually dipping in the holy ash-pot. Though the most penitential day in the year, except Good Friday, it is observed by these mercurial people very much like a festival. I remember an eccentric count, with whom we were slightly acquainted, met my sister Florence on that day at some public function, and

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astonished her by making the sign of the cross on her forehead, with the words, '*Je vous donne la benediction Catholique.*'"

An old acquaintance whom James was very glad to find in Italy was Charles Lever. He was British Consul at Spezzia, and as high-spirited and rollicking as in the old days in Carlsruhe. Charles James relates how Lever told them of the threatened visit of a British man-of-war which it would be his duty to receive in state. Impecunious as ever, he had, of course, no boat or means of doing this with proper pomp. "But," said Lever, "we can take the British flag in our mouth, and swim out to meet her, singing '*Rule Britannia*'"—a truly Hibernian figure of speech.

Charles James continues :

"The new acquaintances whom we made in Venice to me, at least, appear the most interesting of reminiscences, and, in fact, some of them were quite distinguished. But to begin with the humblest—among the first things necessary was to engage a pair of gondoliers. These fellows were partners, and could not be had otherwise ; they always wore the livery of their latest patron.

"Among the biggest merchant princes of modern Venice were two Scotch brothers, the Malcolms, who came there in boyhood as poor as church mice. Their only idea was '*business*,' and their company dull enough. All this commercial world of Anglo-Italy was at deadly feud with the money-spending set. Almost every pair of English families located in the city had a fight. (It always is so in small societies.) Within a

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very short time we had come to know them all, and also to learn that they did not know each other. The person we saw most was a writer of sea novels in the style of Marryat—Captain Chamier.¹ His wife was a handsome woman. She was so radical in politics that I wonder they escaped being ordered by the Government to leave. She was also pious. The children of this couple were grown up, married, and somewhere else; but the Captain and Mrs. Chamier were very young-looking grandparents. Towards the end of our stay there—shortly before my father's last illness—something came out about their past which cooled the intimacy, but I never learned what it was. Captain Chamier's particular enemy was named Graves. I remember his telling Cridland and me, during my father's last illness, the details, just reported, of the everlasting famous prize-fight between Sayers and Heenan. The renown of this international combat may be inferred from the fact that the *Gazetta di Venezia* was full of it.

The champion bore of English Venetian society was an old woman, Lady Sorrel. She had known all the princes, counts, dukes, and kings of the country, and had not learned that talking incessantly about one's titled acquaintance is bad form. There was a singularly 'luny' family from the Emerald Isle whose name was Swift, and

¹ Frederick Chamier, R.N. (1796-1870). Author of *The Life of a Sailor* (1832); *Ben Brace* (1836), etc. He also edited and continued William James's *Naval History*. His wife, whom he married in 1832, was Elizabeth, daughter of John Soane (1787-1823), of Chelsea, and grand-daughter of Sir John Soane.

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who claimed relationship to the Dean of St. Patrick's¹; the paternal Swift was dead or emigrated; a son, violently insane, and a daughter, not quite, named Stella! What was to be done with her was a problem which came on the British Consul, as all English troubles did. The poor fellow, the brother, recovered, and seemed very grateful for such advice and assistance as my father was able to give when he needed it most. There was an aunt, but she chose to be a Catholic, whereas the brother was as stiff-necked in the other direction as an Irish Protestant usually is. I saw something of the aunt in consequence of Stella being with her temporarily while the brother was insane, but the girl was also under my father's consular sort of guardianship. The aunt was reputed a disagreeable person; but I found her palavering to the limit—speaking mellifluous Italian (she had forgotten English) with Irish lips which evidently had often kissed the Blarney Stone. I was there on a beastly cold day of Italian winter; and was introduced, with great ceremony, to her dog, an Italian greyhound. There was also in Venice an Englishman named Raineford—a name much resembling one of my father's—who conceived himself to be an artist, and professed the principles of the Pre-Raphaelite school. He, too, came under my father's supervision through being sick.

"The most mysterious of our foreign acquaintance was a certain Madame Goethe; she was somehow related to the poet. She was

¹ Possibly they were descendants of Swift's cousins, Deane or Thomas.

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very old, very white, and very Deutsch. One point of interest only I discovered in her salon : it contained some very old German furniture, inlaid with atrocious roughness.

“ Among the colonists from England, or some country speaking the same language, was a widow named Stewart, who seemed indeed to be a curious mixture. She said she had been in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—a great deal undoubtedly in America (U.S.A.) and India, where her health had been permanently impaired ; but there was also a good deal of Irish about her. She was more disagreeably religious than Mrs. Chamier. We were without Church (to my secret ungodly delight) because my father would not attend the hebdomadal service of the official chaplain, one Merryweather, of whose delinquencies this Mrs. Stewart was the first to tell us. I can see her, as she did it. I have since heard something of Merryweather as an author¹ ; but a man so little troubled with piety that the former consul Harris, considered him no good for a clergyman. My father did not like Mrs. Stewart. He pronounced her an old newsmonger. But I was glad to go to Mrs. Stewart’s, for in her parlour, which was gorgeous and sombre, I always found something I could read, which was not everywhere the case.

“ There was an Italian count whose name was Scotti, a very eccentric character. He

¹ There was an author named F. Somner Merryweather, who wrote *Bibliomania in the Middle Ages*, 1849 ; *Lives and Anecdotes of Misers*, 1850 ; *The Free Church of England*, 1873 ; and *Gilbert Wright, the Gospeller, A Tale of the Lollards*, 1878.

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grimaced and pawed the air, and 'elocuted' with more than average Italian volubility; but he always had something graphically odd to say. Speaking of someone who had jaundice, he said that this individual's 'face was yellow, and his hair red (which it was), and he looked like the sun in a fog.'

"There was a great deal of sickness in Europe during this winter (1858-9). Diphtheria was about, and being regarded as a new disease, just come from America, it excited much fear. There was also a great deal of acute and chronic bronchitis. Mrs. Jameson, the authoress, died of it, I think, at Florence,¹ during this winter. Another person who narrowly survived was an old political antagonist of my father's, Fox by name, who was the Whig candidate for the borough of Sandwich when my father lived at Walmer and was active on the Tory side.² He came to Venice during this winter, and they fought their battles over again in a very amicable spirit.

"This Fox was somehow related to the family known as FitzClarence, the illegitimate posterity of the Duke of Clarence (afterwards King William IV) and Mrs. Jordan, a celebrated Irish actress.³ Clarence was a naval officer, and

¹ Mrs. Jameson (Anna Brownell) died at Ealing on March 17th, 1860, from the effects of a severe chill, which she contracted on a bitterly cold wintry day when returning home from the Reading Room at the British Museum.

² See *ante*, page 99.

³ Lady Mary FitzClarence, second daughter of William IV and Mrs. Jordan, married in 1824 General Charles Richard Fox (illegitimate son of the third Lord Holland and Elizabeth Vassall, Lady Webster).

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brought the Bourbon King back after Napoleon's fall. The French gave him an ovation, of course, and sang (as well as they could) 'God Save the King,' ending with this remarkable impromptu :

'God save noble Clarence,
He who brings her King to France.
He supports ze glory
Of ze British Navy ;
O God, make him happy.'¹

"Another anecdote of 'noble Clarence' is that, waxing enthusiastic over the surpassing clearness of the water at Malta, he exclaimed, 'At forty fathoms deep, sir, you could see the bottom red with lobsters, by God' (live lobsters are not red—nor dead lobsters either, unless they have been boiled). I remember to have heard my father tell stories about his eccentricity.

"By far the most intimate of our foreign acquaintance in Venice were the Count (Almoro III) Pisani and his wife. She was an intellectual woman, the daughter of Millingen, the doctor at Missolonghi when Byron died. Her mother had been a Circassian slave in a Turkish harem, but she escaped to Missolonghi, and lived with Millingen. When the place fell, her life was in danger, and he married her that he might claim her as a British subject. She eventually published her memoirs

¹ The Duke of Clarence, Admiral of the Fleet, on board H.M.S. *Jason*, commanded the escort accompanying Louis XVIII on his return to France in April, 1814.

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under the title, *Thirty Years in the Harem*.¹

"The most distinguished foreigner was the ill-fated Maximilian,² brother of the Emperor of Austria. He was the only Austrian who was popular in Venice—he really was liked. The Comte de Chambord,³ claimant to the French Crown, dwelt in Venice on an island ominously called St. Helena (Sant' Elena). His mother, the Duchesse de Berri, was still living there. She had married a second husband, an Italian, and presented the throneless king with a half-brother, Lucchesi Palli by name, who used to strut about covered with obsolete orders of chivalry.⁴ My relatives said the Comte de

¹ Julius Millingen (1800-1878), the physician, by his marriage with this lady also had a son, Frederick Millingen, who became Osman Bey, of the Turkish Army. The book was entitled *Thirty Years in the Harem, or the Autobiography of Melek-Hanum* (Malik Khaânám), 1872. The author's son supplemented it with a work entitled *Les Anglais en Orient, 1830-1876, Vraie version du livre Trente Ans au Harem*, par Osman Bey.

² During 1857-1859 Maximilian was Governor of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom. He became Emperor of Mexico in 1864, and was murdered in 1867. His widow, Charlotte, daughter of Leopold I, King of the Belgians, died in 1927, in Belgium, at the age of eighty-six.

³ The legitimate Henri V, King of France (1820-1885), grandson of Charles X, being the son of that King's second son, the Duc de Berri, who was assassinated in Paris in 1820. The Duc de Berri had married, in 1816, Caroline, daughter of Francis I, King of Naples. The Comte de Chambord married, in 1846, the Archduchess Maria Theresa of Austria Este, daughter of Francis IV, Duke of Modena, the direct heir of the House of Stuart, who would have been King of England but for the Act of 1701.

⁴ The Duchesse de Berri (1798-1870) by her second husband, Ettore Carlo Lucchesi, Duke della Grazia and Prince of



LUCCHESI-PALLI,
DUCA DELLA GRAZIA.

From "A Princess of Adventure," by H. Noel Williams.

[Facing page 242.]

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Chambord was a good man, very humane and gentlemanly, but he made a profession of belonging to the past.¹

"In Venice there were English or Irish 'exiles'—among them real live Jacobites, who would not call Victoria 'Queen of England.' Every fad that happened to be started in a world too fashionable for ordinary uses was sure to have its devotees among some of the self-styled cream of Venice. An Irish girl, a Miss Neville, had revived the curtsy of a hundred years before, for when she paid her respects to any one she almost knelt on one knee. As she was short and wore the globular crinoline of the period, the effect was that she seemed about to disappear within the sphericity of her hoops."²

Campofranco, had two sons, Emmanuel, tenth Prince of Campofranco, and Adinolfo, eighth Duke della Grazia. The son of the latter, the ninth Duke della Grazia, married in 1924 Lady Hermione Herbert, daughter of the Earl of Powis.

¹ Florence James, the novelist's daughter, writes in a letter of this date: "The Count de Chambord, who keeps his Court here as well as his mother, the Duchesse de Berri, . . . is a very pleasant, unaffected, cordial-mannered man, and his wife is one of the most angelic dispositions ever known on earth. We are to dine there next Thursday. I have never been at their dinners yet, but their evening parties are among the most pleasant in Venice, notwithstanding the ceremony of Court etiquette. The Arch Duke (Maximilian), Viceroy of Lombardy, is beloved beyond all description, even by the most rabid of Italian revolutionists, for his goodness and sympathy for all suffering."

² Apparently the "custom" spread among British ladies in Italy, for Charles Lever in *Davenport Dunn* (published in the same year, 1859, that Charles James writes about) has a scene at Como, where Molly O'Reilley "holding out her dress with both hands, performed a kind of minute curtsy

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Such was the polyglot society—often amusing but more often trying—amid which James passed his last days ; though he had now lost his taste for social functions, and it was only with difficulty that he was persuaded to go out at all. But, indeed, his health—he was a martyr to suppressed gout and asthma—would account for this change. In February, 1859, he had an attack of paralysis, and at times his mind was completely obscured. He rallied, however, and during the first period of the Italian-Austrian War attended to his consular duties, and remained in Venice despite the entreaties of his friends. The city was threatened with siege, and James sent his family to the Tyrol during the summer of 1859.

The story of the last year of James's life is a very sad one. He was a complete wreck, bodily and mentally. His many ailments increased, and he was at times in a state of imbecility. He drank more alcohol than was wise or necessary.

to the Viscount, to which he responded with a bow that might have done credit to Versailles." The incident forms one of Phiz's illustrations for *Davenport Dunn*. The sketches of English society in the Italian portion of this book, and also in *The Daltons*, much resemble what Charles James relates of it in Venice. For example, the aunt of the Swift family, previously mentioned (page 238), might well have suggested the character of Mrs. Montague-Ricketts in *The Daltons*.

Charles Lever generally drew his characters from life. Lady Ritchie (Thackeray's daughter) mentions in her Journal, 1855, that, at dinner one night, her father, Frederick Tennyson, and Solomon Hart, R.A., "talked a good deal about Italy and Italian politics, about Florence and the bad society there, about Lever, who puts all his acquaintances into his books."

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His kindly, warm-hearted temperament was affected also by his sufferings, and he was now subject to violent fits of irritation, succeeding heavy, stupor-like sleep. In these circumstances his duties and personal affairs became greatly neglected, and the worry of his grave financial condition was added to the burden. Although his salary as consul was £700 a year, the post compelled him to live in some state in a fashionable quarter of the city ; and after he had paid £160 for his apartment, £230 for his gondoliers and firing, and £200 for his consular assistant, it is obvious how little was left for the living and personal expenses of a family of four with servants in addition. His servants included an English couple named Baldwin, whom James had brought over from London, and they and Mr. Cridland, his assistant in the consulate, attended the dying novelist with the most loving devotion, either one or the other remaining with him night and day. He had, however, extraordinary rallies from his imbecile state, for the following business letter—perhaps the last he penned—is perfectly lucid.

“ British Consulate General,
“ Venice.

“ 7th April, 1860.

“ My dear Sir,

“ I am very much obliged by your kind letter which will afford great assistance to my son, and gives great help to me. . . . I have drawn as you directed, and will send you the assignment in a day or two, but I think it will be necessary to put in one or two works which you

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do not seem to have heard of. My eyes are somewhat better, but still very sore, as perhaps you will see by the handwriting of

“ Yours faithfully,

“ G. P. R. JAMES.”

A week later he had a second stroke of paralysis.

His last days were spent in the Palazza Ferro, on the Grand Canal ; and he found pleasure in being rowed out in his gondola to the Lido, whence returning he could see the magic spectacle of Venice silhouetted against the glowing sunset skies. To the last, he—who had depicted in words many a fiery sunset illuminating some wild or romantic scene—preserved the historic sense and the appreciation of beauty. “ The legendary splendour of old days, the spirit of Romance dies not to those who hold a kindred spirit in their souls,” and there is a touch of appropriateness in the fact that the romancer’s eyes gazed their last and grew dim for ever upon the history-haunted Venetian land rather than in America—a country where he, who was so essentially of the old régime, never felt at home, and whose people and conditions were alike foreign to his temperament. True enough, Venice, as Thackeray put it, is “ the only city in Europe where the famous ‘ Two Cavaliers ’ cannot by any possibility be seen riding together ” : but The Solitary Horseman—Death—was at hand for one who was very weary and ready to ride to Eldorado.

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“ Down the Valley of the Shadow
Ride, boldly ride,”
The Shade replied,

“ If you seek for Eldorado.”

During the last week of his life James suffered no pain, and he was comparatively happy in mind, which, though dulled and apathetic, was free from the anxiety, grief, and gloom that had racked it previously. Those about him do not seem to have realised how near the end was, for only eight days previous to his death his daughter, Florence, had written home and secured him leave of absence, with a view to ultimate retirement. On the morning of June 8th, 1860, James suddenly fell back into the arms of his servant, Baldwin; two hours later he was speechless; an agonising struggle for breath, and insensibility followed; without recovering from this condition he died at 4.30 a.m. the following morning.¹ He had reached the age of fifty-eight years.

James was buried two days later, in the presence of all the chief officials of Venice, in the Protestant cemetery on San Michele—The Island of the Dead—about a mile from the city. It is a singularly picturesque spot—a garden guarded from the sea by fortress-like walls. The best description of the scene is that given by Eric Mackay:²

¹ Another English writer also died suddenly in Venice, in 1913—the eccentric Frederick Serafino Mary Rolfe, “Baron Corvo,” author of *Hadrian VII*, *Don Tarquinio*, *In His Own Image*, and other works. He was born in July, 1860, a few weeks after the date of James’s death.

² *An English Grave in Venice*, from *Days and Nights in Italy*, by George Eric Mackay, published at Rome, offices of *The Roman Times*, 1872.

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“What a lonely looking place it was, with its stone staircase leading down to the sea and wetted by it ; its gateway with a creaking door in it ; its wall like the wall of a fortified town or a monastery. . . . The Protestant burial ground struck me as being one of the loveliest spots I ever saw—with its cypress trees at one end and its ivy-covered porch at the other—its plants, its graves, its garden walks . . . and roses in full bloom everywhere. . . . I wanted to see a grave—an English grave—which I knew was to be found here, and about which I had feelings of reverence—the grave of G. P. R. James, the author of half the romances in the circulating library, when he and Mr. Godwin, and a few others, had it all to themselves, and wrote a novel a month. . . .

“I dare say the sexton knew little enough about G. P. R. James, or what he had done for the amusement and instruction of his fellow creatures, for he shook his head and scratched it (as I am bound to confess) when I mentioned his name and quality ; but when I told him I wanted to see the grave of the last British Consul who had died in Venice, he was with me in an instant. He knew all about it. It was all right. This way if I pleased, Signore ! He had buried the consul with his own hands, and a nicer or better gentleman never lay in his shroud.

“I was glad to see that the grave-digger was not quite callous to human feeling. He raised his cap respectfully before the tomb of the British Consul, and brushed it tenderly with the palm of his hand, that I might read the inscription. I gazed long and earnestly at this famous



SAN MICHELE, THE ISLAND OF THE DEAD, VENICE.
The burial place of G. P. R. JAMES.



THE GRAVE OF G. P. R. JAMES (IN THE ISLAND OF THE DEAD,
VENICE).

The Epitaph written by Walter Savage Landor.

[Facing page 248.]

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grave, and placed a flower upon it with a sprig of laurel. . . . It is a simple marble slab surrounded by an iron railing. The name and obituary had been inscribed in golden letters, but the wind and rain have washed the gold away, and only the carving is to be seen. I am sorry to say that this carving is not very legible. Some day, perhaps, another Old Mortality may be found sitting upon this grave, cutting out the letters afresh, and clearing away what moss or ivy may have collected there in the lapse of centuries. I stooped down and read these simple words :

“ ‘ GEORGE PAYNE RAINFORD¹ JAMES
BRITISH CONSUL GENERAL
IN THE ADRIATIC
DIED IN VENICE
ON THE 9TH JUNE, 1860.

HIS MERITS AS A WRITER ARE
KNOWN WHEREVER THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE IS, AND AS A MAN THEY
REST ON THE HEARTS OF MANY.

A FEW FRIENDS HAVE ERECTED
THIS HUMBLE AND PERISHABLE
MONUMENT.’

“ Such is the epitaph of G. P. R. James, the English Novelist. Not one word about his wife, who survived him, or his age, which was considerable, or his Christian virtues—patience, faith, charity—which were great. Nothing but

¹ The omission of the letter S in the name Rainsford must have been an error of the Italian mason who carved the inscription. The epitaph was written by Walter Savage Landor.

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the statement thus transcribed (simple and touching enough, God knows!) and the fact that his works—always pure and hopeful, and distinguished by a chivalrous respect for ladies, and a true sense of honour—are to be read, and read again, by all who admire an honest tale told by an honest man to honest people. May it be said of the man who (if statistics be correct) is dying every moment while the world rolls on—every tick of the clock being funeral chimes : ‘ His merits . . . as a man rest in the hearts of many.’ ”

The body of G. P. R. James was not destined to rest in the grave where it was originally laid, and the same uncertainty and brevity which marked the tenure of his earthly homes were repeated in his last resting-place. In 1895 it was decided to remove the Protestant Cemetery (which was a small space about one thousand yards square, surrounded by a wall seven feet in height, in the centre of the Roman Catholic burial ground) to another site on the island of San Michele, thus leaving room for the enlargement of the Roman Catholic Cemetery. In February, 1895, notice was sent to the relatives of seventeen English persons who had been buried in the Protestant Cemetery that the bodies would be removed free of cost. No reply was received from the representatives of G. P. R. James, but the British Vice-Consul had the remains of his predecessor reverently exhumed and reburied in a sunny piece of freehold land in the new cemetery. The memorial stone was also removed to the same spot.¹

¹ See *The Times*, March 19th, 1896.

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In 1912 the place was visited by the novelist's grand-daughter, Miss Margaret James-Williams, who thus describes it :

"The graveyard is on a tiny island near Venice and is all surrounded by high stone walls. Inside are ivy and vines and shrubs and flaming red Agrippina, red roses clambering over everything, a few big trees, and moss covered tombstones. When I came upon our grandfather's tomb a young squirrel was sitting right on the flat stone nibbling nuts. Flowers of all seasons grow wildly and luxuriantly."

Such is the last lonely home of a man of many friendships ; and though he died far away from the English scenes of happier days and old friends, his final resting-place—a veritable "tomb by the sounding sea," yet amid a profusion of roses, flowering shrubs, ivy, cypress, and vine—is a fitting one for a chronicler of old romance.

After James's death his affairs proved to be in great confusion. No will could be found, and no list of his investments in America and elsewhere. As regards his books, it transpired that he had disposed of all his copyrights (except those of four historical works) to Simms and M'Intyre, of Belfast, in 1850 ; and of the works he published after arriving in America, the copyrights for the entire first editions were held by the publisher in London, Thomas Newby. His debts in Venice amounted to £600, and considerable sums had been advanced to him by the second Duke of Wellington, who, it appears, had invested money in American property in James's name. The Duke, however, behaved with great generosity to his late friend's family. He not

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only waived his first claim to the realisation of the American property, but helped in many ways. He took upon himself also the education of Charles James, then aged thirteen, at a cost of £100 a year ; the boy was sent to Cheltenham College for two years, and finished his education in 1865 at Brighton College.

The widow, and her daughter Florence, decided to return to America in 1861, in order to be near the eldest son, Walter. The Royal Literary Fund granted her £100. Mrs. G. P. R. James took up her abode at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and became noted for her charity and good works. She died in Pine Street, at the age of ninety-one, on June 9th, 1891, having survived her husband thirty-one years to the very day.

Charles Dickens died exactly ten years later than G. P. R. James, namely on June 9th, 1870, at the age of fifty-eight, the same age as James.

CHAPTER IX

L'Envoy: The Solitary Horseman

IN all the annals of literature probably no tag has attached more persistently to an author than the "solitary horseman" or "two cavaliers"—for the number of equestrians varies in both the books and the public mind—of G. P. R. James. Thus Sir Edmund Gosse, in his *Modern English Literature*, speaks of the days when the "cavaliers of G. P. R. James were riding down innumerable roads"; and the late Justin McCarthy, in his *History of Our Own Times*, observes: "Many of us can remember, without being too much ashamed of the fact, that there were early days when Mr. James and his cavaliers and his chivalric adventures gave nearly as much delight as Walter Scott could have done to the youth of a preceding generation. But Walter Scott is with us still, young and old, and poor James is gone. His once famous solitary horseman has ridden away into actual solitude, and the shades of night have gathered over his heroic form."

But the man who really branded this literary trade-mark upon James was Thackeray in his burlesque, *Barbazure*, By G. P. R. Jeames, Esq., etc.—the cleverest of the series of *Novels by Eminent Hands* with the exception, perhaps, of

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the parody of Lever. *Barbazure* is something more than a parody—it is the actual presentment of James's style, where every trick and mannerism and detail is caught and reproduced. Making allowances for intentional absurdities, the opening scene might have been written by James himself :

“ It was upon one of those balmy evenings of November, which are only known in the valleys of Languedoc and among the mountains of Alsace, that two cavaliers might have been perceived by the naked eye threading one of the rocky and romantic gorges that skirt the mountain-land between the Marne and the Garonne. The rosy tints of the declining luminary were gilding the peaks and crags which lined the path, through which the horsemen wound slowly ; and as these eternal battlements, with which Nature had hemmed in the ravine which our travellers trod, blushed with the last tints of the fading sunlight, the valley below was grey and darkling, and the hard and devious course was sombre in twilight. A few goats, hardly visible among the peaks, were cropping the scanty herbage here and there. The pipes of shepherds, calling in their flocks as they trooped homewards to their mountain villages, sent up plaintive echoes which moaned through those rocky and lonely steeps ; the stars began to glimmer in the purple heavens spread serenely overhead ; and the faint crescent of the moon, which had peered for some time scarce visible in the azure, gleamed out more brilliantly at every moment, until it blazed as if in triumph at the sun's retreat. . . .

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“ Along the darkening mountain-paths the two gentlemen (for such their outward bearing proclaimed them) caracolled together. The one, seemingly the younger of the twain, wore a flaunting feather in his barret-cap, and managed a prancing Andalusian palfrey that bounded and curvetted gaily. A surcoat of peach-coloured samite and a purfled doublet of vair bespoke him noble, as did his brilliant eye, his exquisitely chiselled nose, and his curling chestnut ringlets. Youth was on his brow ; his eyes were dark and dewy, like spring violets ; and spring roses bloomed upon his cheek—roses, alas ! that bloom and die with life’s spring. Now bounding over a rock, now playfully whisking off with his riding-rod a floweret in his path, Philibert de Coquelicot rode by his darker companion.

“ His comrade was mounted upon a *destrière* of the true Norman breed, that had first champed grass on the green pastures of Aquitaine. Thence through Berry, Picardy, and the Limousin, halting at many a city and commune, holding joust and tourney in many a castle and manor of Navarre, Poitou, and St. Germain l’Auxerrois, the warrior and his charger reached the lonely spot where now we find them.

“ The warrior who bestrode the noble beast was in sooth worthy of the steed which bore him. Both were caparisoned in the fullest trappings of feudal war. The arblast, the mangonel, the demi-culverin, and the cuissart of the period, glittered upon the chest and neck of the warsteed, while the rider, with chamfrain and catapult, with ban and arrière-ban, morion and tumbrel, battle-axe and rifflard, and the other

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appurtenances of ancient chivalry, rode stately on his steel-clad charger, himself a tower of steel. . . ."

The conglomeration above of archaic trappings is excellent fooling, for it must be admitted that James was over-generous in his descriptions of costume and appointments, and "the fair youth of but scarce seventeen summers" riding by the side of an older warrior was a familiar feature of his romances.

In the popular conception James's "two cavaliers" always appear in the first chapter. How far is this belief justified? Putting aside biographies and collections of short stories, James wrote fifty-seven works which may be classified as romances, and in only seventeen of these horsemen—single, or in pairs, or parties—make an early appearance. In six books "a solitary horseman" appears in the first chapter¹ and in two others he delays his arrival until the second²; "two cavaliers" caracole in the first chapters of three books³ and in the second of another⁴; and "parties of horsemen" prance in, at least, six books during the first chapter.⁵ It will thus be seen that the "two cavaliers" are in a minority, and that the "solitary horseman" is the most predominant of James's romantic equestrians.

¹ *Darnley*; *One in a Thousand*; *The Gentleman of the Old School*; *Arabella Stuart*; *Beauchamp*; and *The Last of the Fairies*.

² *The King's Highway* and *Rose D'Albret*.

³ *The Gipsy*; *Agincourt*; and *Heidelberg*.

⁴ *Richelieu*.

⁵ *Richelieu*; *Philip Augustus*; *Mary of Burgundy*; *Henry of Guise*; *Corse de Leon*; and *Arrah Neil*.

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But it is interesting to note that the seventeen works in which the horsemen appear were *all written prior to or in 1847*, the year when Thackeray's *Barbazure* was first published (in *Punch*). That James took this satire to heart is attested by the fact that in all the twenty or more stories he wrote subsequent to 1847 there is never a sign of horsemen at the outset. Further, James in one of these later books, *The Fate* (1851), alludes to his formerly ubiquitous horsemen, and he pleads their cause so well—both humorously and pathetically—that the passage claims quotation for its biographical interest :

“As to repeating one's self, it is no very great crime, perhaps, for I never heard that robbing Peter to pay Paul was punishable under any law or statute, and the multitude of offenders in this sense, in all ages, and in all circumstances, if not an excuse, is a palliation, showing the frailty of human nature, and that we are as frail as others—but no more. The cause of this self-repetition, probably, is not a paucity of ideas, not an infertility of fancy, not a want of imagination or invention, but like children sent daily to draw water from a stream, we get into the habit of dropping our buckets into the same immeasurable depth of thought exactly at the same place ; and though it be not exactly the same water as that which we drew up the day before, it is very similar in quality and flavour, a little clearer or a little more turbid, as the case may be.

“Now this dissertation . . . has been brought about, has had its rise, origin, source, in an

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anxious and careful endeavour to avoid, if possible, introducing into this work the two solitary horsemen—one upon a white horse—which, by one mode or another, have found their way into probably one out of three of all the books I have written, and I need hardly tell the reader that the name of these books is legion. They are, perhaps, too many; but, though I must die, some of them will live—I know it, I feel it; and I must continue to write while this spirit is in this body.

“To say truth, I do not know why I should wish to get rid of my two horsemen, especially the one on the white horse. Wouwermans always had a white horse in all his pictures; and I do not see why I should not put my signature, my emblem, my monogram, in my paper and ink pictures as well as any painter of them all. I am not sure that other authors do not do the same thing—that Lytton has not always, or very nearly, a philosophising libertine; Dickens a very charming young girl, with dear little pockets; and Lever a bold dragoon. Nevertheless, upon my life, if I can help it, we will not have in this work the two horsemen and the white horse; albeit, in after times—when my name is placed with Homer and Shakespeare, or in any other more likely position—there may arise serious and acrimonious disputes as to the real authorship of the book, from its wanting my own peculiar and distinctive mark and characteristic.¹

¹ People superficially acquainted with literary names invariably confound G. P. R. James with his distinguished namesake, Mr. Henry James. Thus a few years ago,

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" But here, while writing about plagiarism, I have been myself a plagiary ; and it shall not remain without acknowledgment, having suffered somewhat in that sort myself. Here, my excellent friend, Leigh Hunt, soul of mild goodness, honest truth, and gentle brightness! I acknowledge that I stole from you the defensive image of Wouvermans's white horse, which you incautiously put within my reach, on one bright night of long, dreamy conversation."

Here James has put up a very able defence against his detractors, and judging by his simile of the bucket at the well, he bore in mind the gibe of some humorist who said James's frequently appearing books were " like buckets in a well—as fast as one is emptied, up comes another." James, of course, had to endure his full share of chaff in the comic papers and annuals ; and though after *Barbazure* he was

Mr. Adrian H. Joline, happening to tell an apparently intelligent gentleman of Washington City that he had just had the pleasure of conversing with the ultra-modern novelist, Henry James, received in reply a smile and the airy comment—" Oh, the ' two horsemen ' fellow." Mr. Joline endeavoured to explain that the author of *The Golden Bowl* was but seventeen years old when he of the horsemen died. This was certainly a case of *Embarrassments*.

In a short *Life of Lewis Carroll*, published in America in 1910, is this sentence : " Lewis Carroll is evidently imitating the style of some celebrated writer—Henry James most likely, who is rather fond of opening his stories with ' two travellers,' or perhaps Sir Walter Scott."

In *The Life of J. H. Shorthouse*, where allusion is made to G. P. R. James's book, *The Woodman*, the reference is indexed under " Henry James."

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let off lightly in *Punch*¹ (where Bulwer Lytton and Ainsworth were continuously attacked), he was constantly baited in *The Man in the Moon*, edited by Albert Smith and Angus B. Reach. Here the barbs were sometimes acutely pointed. For example :

“ ADVERTISEMENTS EXTRAORDINARY :

“ *To be sold : The Beauties of James* (very scarce). 1 Vol. (Adapted for the waistcoat pocket.) ”

“ *To be sold : A Catalogue of James's Novels.* 9 vols. folio.”

“ POPULAR DELUSIONS.

“ It is a popular delusion to believe that the new series of Mr. James's novels can ever be completed.”²

“ QUESTIONS RESPECTFULLY PUT TO G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.

“ 1. Why do you begin all your romances ‘ When a sultry summer's day was drawing to its close ’ ?

“ 2. Why do ‘ two travellers ’ always happen at that moment to be ‘ wending their way along the fertile plains of Languedoc ’ ?

¹ In Chapter XVI of *The Book of Snobs*, Thackeray says : “ And what Briton can read without enjoyment the works of James, so admirable for terseness.”

² In *The Southern Times and Dorsetshire Herald*, 7th January, 1854, a humorous chronologer of future events prognosticated : “ 1901. Publication of Mr. James's 2,000th novel.” See also page 296.

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- “ 3. Why is one of the twain a man whose
‘ grizzled hair, chased and worn by the
pressure of the helmet, and whose
gaunt cheeks, bronzed by the burning
suns of Palestine, spoke of the returning
warrior of the Crusades ’ ?
- “ 4. Why is the second of the two travellers
always ‘ a stripling ’ ?
- “ 5. Why have ‘ eighteen summers passed
over his fair head ’ ?
- “ 6. Why do both the travellers always ride
on for some time ‘ preserving a moody
silence ’ ?
-
- “ 11. How long do you intend to keep on
writing such stuff ? ”

James's answer to the last question might well have been (as Sir Francis Burnand suggested to the present writer)—“ As long as the public pays me to do so,” for he usually received £500 or more for each of his romances. He was not destitute of a sense of humour at his own expense, for he once drew an excellent caricature of himself, surrounded by his dogs and horses—all with their tails enlarged and upstanding—with the title, “ The author of *Richelieu*—and many other *tails*.” He delighted also in a caricature drawn of him as “ The Solitary Horseman ” by the American artist, Felix Darley.

Mrs. A Pryor, in her *Reminiscences of Peace and War*, relates that she and her family knew G. P. R. James in Washington :

“ We were very fond of Mr. James, no one was brighter, wittier, or more genial. One day he

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dashed in much excited: 'Have you seen *The Intelligencer*? By George! it's all true! Six times has my hero, a solitary horseman, emerged from a wood! My word! I was totally unconscious of it! Fancy it! Six times! Well, it's all up with that fellow. He has got to dismount and enter on foot—a beggar, or burglar, or pedler, or at best a mendicant friar.' 'But,' suggested one, 'he might drive, mightn't he?' 'Impossible!' said Mr. James. 'Imagine a hero in a gig or a curricule!' 'Perhaps,' said another, 'the word *solitary* has given offence. Americans dislike exclusiveness. They are sensitive, you see, and look out for snobs!' He made himself very merry over it; but the solitary horseman appeared no more in the few novels he was yet to write.

"One day, after a pleasant visit from Mr. James and his wife, I accompanied them at parting to the front door, and found some difficulty in turning the bolt. He offered to assist, but I said 'no'—he was not supposed to understand the mystery of an American front door. Having occasion a few minutes afterwards to open the front door for another departing guest, there on his knees outside was Mr. James, who laughingly explained that he had left his wife at the corner, and had come back to investigate that mystery. 'Perhaps you will tell me,' he added, and was much amused to learn that the American door opened of itself to an incoming guest, but positively refused without coaxing, to let him out. 'By George, that's fine,' he said, 'that will please the critics in my next.'"

James did not mind humorous satire much—

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which, after all, was only proof of his vogue and prominence (many a "celebrity" to-day longs to be caricatured by Max Beerbohm or to be mentioned in *Punch*): it was the anonymous reviewer who had power to inflict pain upon him. As his letters have shown, he resented keenly uncritical abuse by nameless scribes, such as appears in this review of *Arrah Neil* in *Graham's American Monthly Magazine*:

"In our opinion there is hardly an instance on record of an author who has contrived to earn an extensive reputation as a writer of works of imagination with such slender intellectual materials as Mr. James. No one has ever written so many books, purporting to be novels, with so small a stock of heart, brain, and invention. He is continually infringing his own copyright, by reproducing his own novels. . . ."¹

One celebrated writer, certainly, Edgar Allan Poe, expressed the same sentiments, but more politely: "James's multitudinous novels seem to be written upon the plan of the songs of the Bard of Schiraz, in which, we are assured by Fadladeen, 'the same beautiful thought occurs again and again in every possible variety of phrase' . . . we seldom stumble across a novel emotion in the solemn tranquility of his pages." Poe was a great original genius, but he has not been regarded seriously as a critic.

James—or his shade—need never be troubled by the adverse critics of his works, for the ap-

¹ Perhaps this was the same reviewer who, in 1848, informed the readers of *Graham's Magazine* that "*Vanity Fair* by W. M. Thackerway" (sic) "is one of the most striking novels of the season."

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preciations in his favour expressed by celebrated literary men form a large majority. It is quite remarkable how many great minds have found pleasure—and not only in their boyhood—in the works of a writer who, if not in the front rank of merit, was certainly meritorious.

As already related, Sir Walter Scott and Washington Irving praised and encouraged James's earliest work ; and so did John Wilson (" Christopher North ") in *Noctes Ambrosianæ* :

" *North* : ' Mr. Colburn has lately given us two books . . . *Richelieu* and *Darnley*, by Mr. James. *Richelieu* is one of the most spirited, amusing, and interesting romances I ever read ; characters well drawn—incidents well managed—story perpetually progressive—catastrophe at once natural and unexpected—moral good, but not goody,—and the whole felt, in every chapter, to be the work of a—gentleman.'

" *Shepherd* : ' And what o' *Darnley* ? '

" *North* : ' Read and judge.' "

Leigh Hunt was exceedingly grateful in his acknowledgment of the pleasure this author gave him :

" I hail every fresh publication of James, though I half know what he is going to do with his lady, and his gentleman, and his landscape, and his mystery, and his orthodoxy, and his criminal trial. But I am charmed with the new amusement which he brings out of old materials. I look on him as I look on a musician famous for ' variations.' I am grateful for his vein of cheerfulness, for his singularly varied and vivid landscapes, for his power of painting women at once lady-like and loving (a rare talent), for

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making lovers to match, at once beautiful and well-bred, and for the solace which all this has afforded me, sometimes over and over again in illness and in convalescence, when I required interest without violence, and entertainment at once animated and mild."

Allan Cunningham and S. C. Hall expressed similar sentiments ; and even R. H. Horne, in *A New Spirit of the Age*, where he showered vitriolic abuse on Bulwer Lytton, Ainsworth, and "Ingoldsby," was complimentary to James :

"There seems to be no limit to his ingenuity, his faculty of getting up scenes and incidents, dilemmas, artifices, contretemps, battles, skirmishes, disguises, escapes, trials, combats, adventures. He accumulates names, dresses, implements of war and peace, official retinues, and the whole paraphernalia of costumes, with astounding alacrity. He appears to have exhausted every imaginable situation, and to have described every available article of attire on record. What he must have passed through—what triumphs he must have enjoyed—what exigencies he must have experienced—what love he must have suffered—what a grand wardrobe his brain must be! He has made some poetical and dramatic efforts, but this irresistible tendency to pile up circumstantial particulars is fatal to those forms of art which demand intensity of passion. In stately narratives of chivalry and feudal grandeur, precision and reiteration are desirable rather than injurious—as we would have the most perfect accuracy and finish in a picture of ceremonials ; and here Mr. James is supreme. One of his court romances

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is a book of brave sights and heraldic magnificence—it is the next thing to moving at our leisure through some superb and august procession.”

James received a personal compliment from Gladstone, who, after reading *A History of the Life of Richard Cœur-de-Lion*, wrote to the author, with whom he evidently had some acquaintance :

“ Whitehall,

“ May 17, 43.

“ My dear Sir,

“ I thank you very much for your renewed kindness. The perusal of your last work gave me very great pleasure, most of all (though this is but a very slender testimony in their favour) Evesham and Simon de Montfort—of whom I never had before at all an adequate conception.

“ It is true that I am adopted into the Cabinet—and will I fear be alleged as a proof of its poverty. In point of form I cannot succeed Lord Ripon until the Queen holds a council.¹

“ The true and whole secret of the difficulty about Canada corn (and I do not mean that we can wonder at it) is, as I believe, that wheat, without great abundance, is at 46s. a quarter.

“ I remain, my dear Sir,

“ Yours faithfully and obliged,

“ W. E. GLADSTONE.

“ G. P. R. JAMES, Esq.,

“ The Shrubby,

“ Walmer.”

¹ Mr. Gladstone succeeded Lord Ripon as President of the Board of Trade and took his seat in the Cabinet on May 19th, 1843.

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Thackeray, towards the end of his life, recorded his early enjoyment of James—"the veteran, from whose flowing pen we had the books which delighted our young days, *Darnley*, and *Richelieu*, and *De L'Orme*," as he expresses it in his *Round-about Paper : On a Lazy Idle Boy*.¹ In view of the earlier *Barbazure*, it may be added that Lady Ritchie stated to the present writer that Thackeray had a great sympathy and regard for James and his work ; and that her father used to give her, when a girl, James's books to read, which she did with well-remembered pleasure and interest. Lady Ritchie recalled a friend telling Thackeray that once, when abroad, looking through some bars which divided a Catholic Chapel from a Convent beyond, she heard a voice behind her say : " Do you not sometimes wish you were behind there, and at peace from the world ? " The speaker proved to be G. P. R. James.

Frank Smedley, too, gave tribute to James in one of his books—*Frank Fairlegh*, where Harry Oaklands says : " ' I've got James's new novel in my pocket. . . . I'm not going to talk.' Then, without waiting for an answer, he stretched himself at full length on (and beyond) the sofa, and was soon buried in the pages of that best of followers in the footsteps of the mighty Wizard of the North—Walter Scott."

Walter Savage Landor was another who put Scott and James in conjunction. Frederick

¹ Katharine Fullerton Gerould, a writer in *Harper's Magazine*, contributed an article entitled "*Had I the pen of a G. P. R. James.*" The words are attributed to Thackeray, but no reference to the source is given.

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Locker-Lampson visiting Landor at Fiesole in the 'sixties, not long before his death, found him reading a Waverley novel, and congratulated him on having such a pleasant companion in the mellow days. "Yes," said Landor, "and there is another novelist whom I equally admire, my old friend James."

Ainsworth, as related previously, paid James many compliments in a dedicatory letter prefixed to one of his romances, and, later, thought James might be the debated author of *Jane Eyre*.¹

To come down to later times, Robert Louis Stevenson in exile had a longing to reread the romancer that charmed his boyish days. From Saranac in February, 1888, he wrote to E. L. Burlingame :

"Will you send me (from the library) some of the works of my dear old G. P. R. James? With the following especially I desire to make or renew acquaintance : *The Songster*,² *The Gipsy*, *The Convict*, *The Stepmother*, *The Gentleman of the Old School*, *The Robber*. . . .

"This sudden return of an ancient favourite hangs upon an accident. The Franklin County Library contains two works of his, *The Cavalier* and *Morley Ernstein*. I read the first with indescribable amusement—it was worse than I had feared, and yet somehow engaging ; the second (to my surprise) was better than I dared to hope : a good, honest, dull, interesting tale,

¹ See ante, page 119.

² James did not write a book with this title : perhaps *The Smuggler* was intended.

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with a genuine old-fashioned talent in the invention when not strained ; and a good old-fashioned feeling for the English language. This experience awoke appetite, and you see I have taken steps to stay it.

“ R. L. S.”

Perhaps the influence of G. P. R. James lingered in that tale Stevenson meant to write, but never did, of the “ frosty night a *horseman*, on a tragic errand, rattled with his whip upon the green shutters of the inn at Burford Bridge.”

J. H. Shorthouse, another mature reader of James, liked *The Woodman* and *Forest Days*. Mr. Watts-Dunton regarded *Philip Augustus* as the author's best work. Sir Francis Burnand in youth had pleasant and familiar acquaintance with practically all the romances. And finally, Mr. Thomas Hardy, as a boy, delighted in the books of G. P. R. James and still recalls them with pleasure—particularly *The Ancient Régime*.

Enough has been quoted to show that James has had a brilliant array of cultured admirers, and even if he had done no more than fire the youthful imaginations of Thackeray, Stevenson, and Hardy, he would not have written in vain.

It is, of course, true that James's work has not the same appeal to the rising generation as it possessed for his contemporaries and their sons. The youth of to-day likes to imbibe its romance by the rapid methods of the cinema—crude, direct, and without any dilution. Except for the few, James's long-winded descriptions of scenery and costume are boring, his immaculate love scenes vapid, and even his deaths and

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murders feeble compared with the delicious brutality of the filmed cowboy, the New York crook, and Parisian villain. James's style had many faults—diffuseness and a generally mechanical plot, whose workings could be seen from the outset, and a sort of moralising, sentimental "atmosphere" which stultified any true presentment and analysis of character and its results. But this was the paralysing literary convention of his period, and even Dickens and Thackeray were not free from the artifice of ending a story with marriage bells and virtue triumphant and the concurrent downfall and extinction of the wicked ones (who in real life, of course, flourish like the green bay-tree and die in Park Lane). On the other hand, James told a good, blameless yet stirring tale with the real aroma of romance and derring-do and chivalry. And, after all, what more is required of an historical novelist? The scalpel of analysis and the probe for erotomania are not necessities in his outfit.

Of James's many admirable qualities as a man this work has made mention, and they may be summed up in the words of a friend, William Jerdan, who knew him well:

"No man in private life ever more zealously practised the precepts which he taught, and was charitable, liberal, and generous, aye, beyond the measure of cold prudence, and without an atom of selfish reserve. To his fellow-labourers on the oft-ungrateful soil of letters, he was ever indulgent and munificent. He was ever ready to make sacrifices to friendship."¹

¹ *Autobiography of William Jerdan.*

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And of James as an author, his friend, Walter Savage Landor, pronounced this high eulogium :

“ You cannot overvalue James. There is not on God’s earth (I like this expression, vulgar or not) any better creature of His hand, any one more devoted to His high service—the office of improving us through our passions.”¹

Thomas Seccombe once spoke of G. P. R. James as “ one of the mysterious figures in Victorian literature.” If this record has stayed The Solitary Horseman’s ride into the shades of oblivion, dissipated the mists of mystery which hang about him, and presented him as a meritorious writer and a good man, it will have achieved its purpose.

¹ Letter to the author in *Mary Boyle ; Her Book*.

A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE WORKS OF G. P. R. JAMES *with Bibliographical and other Notes*

1. *The Ruined City* / A Poem / by / G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Printed for Henry Colburn / 8, New Burlington Street / 1828.

This privately printed poem describes a visit to ancient ruins in Greece. Extracts were quoted in periodicals, so it was published in the following book, *Adra*, together with *Arthur*.

2. *Adra* / or / *The Peruvians* / *The Ruined City* / etc. / by G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Henry Colburn, New Burlington Street / 1829.

Dedicated to the Earl of Aberdeen. The copy in the British Museum bears the autograph inscription, "Robert Southey, Keswick, from the Author."

3. *Richelieu* / A Tale of France / In Three Volumes / London / Henry Colburn, New Burlington Street / 1829.

Dedicated, without mentioning his name, to Sir Walter Scott. A humorous Preface asserts the narrative following to be one of facts.

Reissued in one volume, No. 17 of Colburn's *Standard Novelists*, 1839.

4. *Darnley* / or the / *Field of the Cloth of Gold* / By the Author of *Richelieu*, etc. / In Three Volumes / London / Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley / 8, New Burlington Street / 1830.

Biographical Preface.

5. *De L'Orme* / By the Author of *Richelieu* and *Darnley* / In Three Volumes / London / Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street / 1830.

In the Preface it is suggested the work resembles a story by another author.

Reissued in one volume, 1837, as No. 56 of Bentley's *Standard Novels*.

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6. *The / History / of / Chivalry / by / G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Colburn and Bentley / New Burlington Street / 1830. No. 4 of The National Library, edited by G. R. Gleig.*

Two illustrations, and long Preface quoting authorities.

7. *Philip Augustus / or The Brothers in Arms / By the Author of Darnley, etc. / In Three Volumes / London / Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street / 1831.*

Dedicated to Robert Southey, from Maxpoffle, near Melrose, 25th May, 1831.

The drama *Marie de Méranie*, by J. Westland Marston, 1850, in which Helen Faucit made a great success, was based to some extent on *Philip Augustus*.

8. *Bertrand de la Croix / or / The Siege of Rhodes / by Mr. James /*

This is a tale extending to ninety-nine pages and forms with three other stories a volume entitled :

The Club Book / being / Original Tales / By Various Authors / Edited by / The Author of The Dominie's Legacy / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for / Cochrane and Pickersgill / 11, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall / 1831.

Reprinted ten years later in Volume III, New Series, of The Romancist and Novelist's Library, edited by William Hazlitt, thus :

Bertrand de la Croix / or the / Siege of Rhodes / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / Author of Richelieu, Darnley, De L'Orme, etc. / London / Published by J. Clements, Little Pulteney Street / for the Proprietors of The Romancist and Novelist's Library / 1841.

With this imprint it is also rarely found, in pamphlet form, bound in wrappers, twenty-five pages. Possibly the various items in The Romancist and Novelist's Library were all issued separately at first.

Bertrand de la Croix was again reprinted in *Eva St. Clair and other Collected Tales*, 1843. See later, page 284.

9. *Henry Masterton / or the / Adventures of a / Young Cavalier / By the Author of Richelieu, etc. / In Three Volumes /*

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London / Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street / 1832.

Republished in 1837, in one volume, as No. 61 of Bentley's Standard Novels, with a frontispiece by J. Cawse.

10. *Memoirs of Great Commanders* By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street / 1832.

Dedicated to John Wilson ("Christopher North").
Second Edition.

Memoirs of Great Commanders / by / G. P. R. James, Esq. / Author of *Dark Scenes of History*, etc. / A new edition / with illustrations by Phiz / London / G. Routledge and Co., Farringdon Street / New York, 18, Beekman Street / 1858.

A curious fact about this edition is that the illustrations stated to be by Phiz are signed Edward Corbould, and are doubtless the work of the latter artist.

11. *The String of Pearls* / By / The Author of *Darnley* / In Two Volumes / London / Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street / (Late Colburn and Bentley) / 1832.

Contains the following tales, written before the author was seventeen years of age :

1. *Hadgee Ibrahim and his Son.*

2. *The Charitable Man and his Dog.*

3. Sequel to No. 1.

4. *The Building of Bagdat.*

5. *The Diver of Oman.*

6. *Travels of Prince Acbar.*

7. *The Palace of the Talisman.*

12. *France in the Lives of her Great Men* / [*The History of Charlemagne* / on second title page] By G. P. R. James, Esq. / Vol. I / *Charlemagne* / London / Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman / 1832.

Contains a portrait of Charlemagne, and dedication to James's former schoolmaster, the Rev. William Carmalt, of Putney, in a letter written from Maxpoffle, Melrose, 4th June, 1832.

13. *Delaware* / or / *The Ruined Family* / A Tale / In Three Volumes / Edinburgh / Printed for Robert Cadell, Edinburgh, and Whittaker and Company, London / 1833.

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Contains Preface written from Innerleithen, 25th May, 1833. This tale of the early years of the nineteenth century appeared anonymously, but it was republished in the Collected Edition of James's romances, Volume XVIII, with the author's name, as :

Thirty Years Since / or / The Ruined Family / A Tale / By /
G. P. R. James / London / Simpkin, Marshall, and Com-
pany / Stationers' Hall Court / 1848.

With an engraved frontispiece by H. K. Browne (Phiz).

Some years later the original title was restored :

Delaware / or / The Ruined Family / By G. P. R. James,
Esq. / A New Edition / London / Routledge, Warne,
and Routledge / Broadway, Ludgate Hill / New York /
129, Grand Street / 1865.

14. *Mary of Burgundy / or / The Revolt of Ghent / By the*
Author of *Darnley*, etc. / In Three Volumes / London /
Printed for Longman (etc.) / Paternoster Row / 1833.

Dedicated to Hugh Scott, of Harden (who in 1835 estab-
lished his claim to be the sixth Baron Polwarth).

15. *The / Life and Adventures / of / John Marston Hall / By*
the Author of *Darnley* / In Three Volumes / London / Long-
man. . . . / Paternoster Row / 1834.

Inscribed, by her request, to the Empress Alexandra
Feoderovna of Russia, wife of the Tsar Nicholas the First.

A sequel to *Henry Masterton*, being a tale of the Great
Civil War. Commences in Lincolnshire. When reprinted
in the Collected Edition of twenty-one of James's romances,
Volume XV, this work was entitled :

The / Little Ball O' Fire / or / The Life and Adventures / of /
John Marston Hall / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / London /
Parry and Company / Leadenhall Street / 1848.

With an engraved frontispiece by H. K. Browne (Phiz).

A later edition, in the Railway Library, bears the reversed
and abbreviated title :

John Marston Hall, or / Little Ball O' Fire / By G. P. R.
James / London / George Routledge and Son / Broadway
Ludgate Hill / New York, 9, Lafayette Place.

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16. *The Gipsy* / A Tale / By the Author of *Richelieu*, etc., etc. / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for / Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman / Paternoster Row, 1835.

Dedicated to George Hamilton Seymour, K.C.B., Minister at Tuscany.

When this work was republished, as Volume I of the Collected Edition, the spelling of the title was altered :

The Gipsy / A Tale / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1844.

With an engraved portrait of G. P. R. James after F. Cruickshank, and frontispiece by Dietz.

17. *My Aunt Pontypool* / In Three Volumes / London / Saunders and Otley / Conduit Street / 1835.

A Tale of London in 1814. Four of the characters, James stated, were drawn from life, and the remainder had prototypes. It was published anonymously, but reprinted with the author's name in 1857, No. 156 of The Parlour Library :

My Aunt Pontypool / A Novel / By G. P. R. James / London / Thomas Hodgson, 13, Paternoster Row.

Republished in America eleven years later under the title of :

Aims and Obstacles / A Romance / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / New York / Harper and Brothers, Publishers / 329 and 331, Pearl Street, Franklin Square / 1868.

A note states the work was entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1851, at New York, by George P. R. James, but he was, of course, dead when the book was published in 1868. In this edition the name of Lady Pontypool was changed to Lady Malwark.

18. *One in a Thousand* / or / *The Days of Henry Quatre* / By the Author of / *The Gipsy* / In Three Volumes / London / Longman . . . / 1835.

Dedicated by permission to King William the Fourth. Commences in Maine and passes to Touraine.

A Tragic Drama based on *One in a Thousand* and entitled *Beatrice of Ferrara*, by Arthur Hume Phinkett, was published in 1837.

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19. *On the / Educational Institutions / of / Germany / By /*
G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Saunders and Otley /
Conduit Street / 1835.

20. *The Desultory Man / By the Author of / Richelieu, etc. /*
In Three Volumes / London / Saunders and Otley / Con-
duit Street / 1836.

Long Dedication to Miss M. L. Boyle, from The Cottage, Great Marlow, 26th September, 1836, wherein it is stated that two thirds of the contents were published anonymously in periodicals—the greater part written many years ago, “those things from which I first obtained an augury of future success . . . received so much praise that I determined to attempt a longer and more laboured composition,” i.e. *Richelieu*.

A note at the end of the book states that all the sketches and verses were written by James except the item entitled *A Young Lady's Story*, which, the context indicates, was the work of Miss M. L. Boyle.

Mary Louisa Boyle, daughter of Admiral Sir Courtenay Boyle (1770-1844) and granddaughter of the seventh Earl of Cork, first met G. P. R. James in 1834 at Florence, when he occupied the Villa Palmieri. She relates:¹

“It was on one of Florence's golden afternoons that my mother and I drove out to dine with Mr. and Mrs. James, and I pressed for the first time those hands which ever afterwards stretched out to me in kindness and hospitality. . . . That high and generous nature, and that warm and noble heart.”

Miss Boyle termed G. P. R. James her literary god-father, and his influence can be traced in her own books, such as *The State Prisoner* (1837) and *The Forester* (1839). Miss Boyle was an intimate friend of Tennyson, whose poem *Spring Flowers* was addressed to her, and his son Hallam (the second Lord Tennyson) married her niece, Miss Audrey Boyle, in 1884.

Miss Mary Louisa Boyle died in 1890. Mrs. Browning said of her: “A kinder, more cordial little creature, full of talent and accomplishment, never had the world's polish upon it. Very amusing too.”

American Edition.

¹ *Mary Boyle: Her Book*, Edited by her nephew, Sir Edmund Courtenay Boyle, K.C.B.

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The / Desultory Man / By the Author of *Richelieu, Darnley,*
etc. / In Two Volumes / New York / Harper and Sons,
Publishers, Franklin Square.

21. *A / History / of / The Life / of / Edward the Black Prince /*
and of / Various Events connected therewith / which
occurred during the Reign of Edward III, King of Eng-
land / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Two Volumes / Lon-
don / Printed for Longman . . . / Paternoster Row, 1836.
Dedicated by permission to the Princess Victoria.
Contains a map and Preface, wherein it is stated this will
probably be the author's last work of history.

22. *The Cabinet Cyclopædia /* Conducted by the / Rev. Dio-
nysius Lardner, LL.D., etc. / Assisted by / Eminent Liter-
ary and Scientific Men / Biography / Eminent Foreign
Statesmen / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London /
Printed for / Longman / Paternoster Row / and John
Taylor / Upper Gower Street / 1836.

Dedicated "To W. G. Bicknell, Esq. This Volume is
inscribed as a testimony of undiminished regard by his old
friend and fellow-traveller, the Author."

James's contributions comprise four volumes of the
series.

Volume II. Cardinal de Richelieu.
Axel, Count Oxensteirn.
Gaspar de Guzman, Duke of San Lucar.
Cardinal Mazarin.

Volume III. Cardinal de Retz.
Marquis de Seiguelai.
John de Witt.
Marquis de Louvois.

Volume IV. Louis de Haro.
Cardinal Dubois.
Cardinal Alberoni.
Duke of Ripperda.

Volume V. Cardinal de Fleury.
Count Zinzendorf.
Marquis of Pombal.
Count Florida Blanca.
Duke of Choiseul.
James Necker.

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The Rev. Dionysius Lardner (1793-1859) who conducted this work, and many other literary and scientific publications, was a clever and remarkable man. He was Professor of Natural Philosophy at London University, but his career in London came to an end after his elopement with a young married woman. The injured husband followed the pair to Paris, gave Lardner a severe thrashing, and subsequently obtained £8,000 damages in the legal courts. Frequent references to Lardner will be found in *The Diaries of W. C. Macready*.

23. *Attila / A Romance / By the / Author of The Gipsy, Mary of Burgundy / One in a Thousand, etc., etc. / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for / Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longman / Paternoster Row / 1837.*

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq. / This book / as a feeble testimony / of strong personal and / sincere admiration / is dedicated / by / his Friend / G. P. R. James.

24. *Memoirs / of / Celebrated Women / Edited by / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Two Volumes / London / Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street / 1837.*

Preface from Marlow, April 26th, 1837, stating the author of the book was his aunt. The subjects comprised Joan of Arc, Margaret of Anjou, Lady Jane Grey, Anna Comnena, Madame de Maintenon, Queen Elizabeth, and Donna Maria Pacheco.

25. *The Robber / A Tale / By the Author of / Richelieu . . . / In Three Volumes / London / Longman . . . / 1838.*

Dedicated to William James Atkinson. A Tale of England in the Eighteenth Century.

26. *The / Life and Times / of / Louis the Fourteenth / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / Historiographer in Ordinary to Her Majesty / Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street / 1838. In Four Volumes.*

27. *A Book / of / The Passions / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / Illustrated with Sixteen Splendid Engravings / From Drawings / By the most Eminent Artists / Under the superintendence of / Mr. Charles Heath / London / Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans / Delloy and Co., Place de la Bourse, Paris / 1839.*

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The Plates were by A. E. Chalon, Edward Corbould, F. P. Stephanoff, and Kenny Meadows. Dedicated to Sir Herbert Taylor, G.C.B. Contains stories entitled *Remorse*, *Jealousy*, *Revenge*, *Love*, *Despair*, and *Hatred*.

Edition in France.

A Book / of / The Passions / By G. P. R. James / To which are added other Tales / By the same Author / Paris / Published by A. and W. Galignani and Co. / No. 18, Rue Vivienne / 1839.

The additional tales were :

A. *Mary of Mantua*, A True History (13 pages). Reprinted in *Eva St. Clair*, 1843.

B. *The Fisherman of Scarphout*, Two Chapters from an old History (20 pages). Previously printed in *The Desultory Man*, 1836. Reprinted in *The Offering to Beauty*, Philadelphia, 1849.

28. *The / Huguenot / A Tale / of / The French Protestants / By the Author of / The Gipsy, etc. / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for / Longman . . . / Paternoster Row / 1839.*

Dedicated to Charles Rudolphe, Lord Clinton, from Fair Oak Lodge, Petersfield, 17th November, 1838.

29. *Charles Tyrrell / or / The Bitter Blood / By G. P. R. James, Esq. . . . / London / Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street / 1839.*

A modern story, opening in Hampshire, where, the author says, he passed pleasant early days. Contains portrait of G. P. R. James after Houghton.

30. *Henry of Guise / or / The States of Blois / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for Longman . . . / Paternoster Row / 1839.*

Dedicated to the Honourable Francis Scott.

31. *The / Gentleman / of / The Old School / A Tale / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for Longman . . . / Paternoster Row / 1839.*

Dedicated to Samuel March Phillipps, Esq.

32. *A / Brief History / of the / United States Boundary Question / Drawn up from Official Papers / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Saunders and Otley / Conduit Street / 1839.*

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Comprises 32 pages, and was originally written as a note upon part of the register kept by G. P. R. James in his capacity of Historiographer to Queen Victoria.

33. *Blanche of Navarre* / A Play / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Printed for Longman . . . / Paternoster Row / 1839.

Dedicated to Thomas Noon Talfourd in a letter which mentions Talfourd's services in improving the law of copyright.

34. *The King's Highway* / A Novel / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Longman / 1840.

Dedicated to Christian Adam Fries, Heidelberg, a merchant who befriended G. P. R. James when a young traveller abroad.

Commences on the coast of Ireland in the time of James the Second and William of Orange.

35. *The Man at Arms* / or / *Henri de Cerons* / A Romance / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street / 1840.

Scene laid in France.

36. *Corse de Leon* / or / *The Brigand* / A Romance / Dedicated by permission to His Majesty the King / of the Belgians / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for / Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans / Paternoster Row / 1841.

It contains a long adulatory letter to King Leopold the First of the Belgians, extolling the benefits his rule had conferred upon Belgium by reason of his wisdom and virtues. It also states that this romance, in its main incident, is founded on a fact recorded in Auvigny's *Life of the Maréchal de Brissac* and in *The Memoirs of Maréchal de Vieilleville*.

When the story was republished in the Collected Edition, Volume X, the titles were reversed :

- The Brigand* / or / *Corse de Leon* / A Romance / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1846.

With a frontispiece by James E. Doyle.

Again republished with the titles thus in 1851, Volume LII of The Parlour Library.

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37. *The Ancient Régime* / A Tale / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Printed for / Longman . . . / Paternoster Row / 1841.

Dedicated to Alexander Hunter, Esq., "one of the earliest, the best, and the wisest of my friends."

Preface dated from The Shrubbery, Walmer, June, 1841. The story deals with France in the eighteenth century.

When this work was republished in the Collected Edition, Volume XXI, the title was changed to :

Castleneuve / or / *The Ancient Régime* / A Tale / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Simpkin, Marshall, and Company / Stationers' Hall Court / 1849.

With an engraved frontispiece from a drawing of Castle-neau by G. P. R. James.

The changed title was continued in the edition of 1850, published by Simms and M'Intyre ; but in an American edition the title was again altered, with a new sub-title, to *The Ancient Régime, or Annette de St. Morin*.

38. *The Jacquerie* / or / *The Lady and the Page* / An Historical Romance / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Longmans, Paternoster Row / 1841.

A tale of the fourteenth century and the insurrection in 1358 of the French peasantry called the Jacquerie.

39. *Letters* / *Illustrative of the* / *Reign of William III* / *from 1696 to 1708* / *Addressed to* / *The Duke of Shrewsbury* / By / James Vernon, Esq. / Secretary of State / Now first published from the originals / Edited by G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Henry Colburn, Publisher / Great Marlborough Street, 1841.

Preface also by G. P. R. James.

40. *Some Remarks* / *on* / *The Corn Laws* / *with Suggestions for an* / *alteration in the sliding scale* / *in a* / *Letter* / *to* / Col. Charles Wyndham, M.P. / by / G. P. R. James / Esq. / London / John Ollivier / 59, Pall Mall, 1841.

Dated 25th September, 1841, from The Shrubbery, Walmer, Dover.

41. *The Fight of the Fiddlers* / In Three Parts / By G. P. R. James, Esq., appeared first in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, March, April, May, 1842.

LIST OF WORKS

Reprinted in *Eva St. Clair and Other Collected Tales*, 1843, and separately as follows :

The Fight / of the Fiddlers / A Serio-Comic Verity / by G. P. R. James, Esq. / Illustrated by H. K. Browne / London / David Bogue / 86, Fleet Street / 1849.

There was a comedy-drama based on *The Fight of the Fiddlers*, entitled *Roger Dalton*, by C. Stewart, 1879.

42. *Morley Ernstein / or / The Tenants of the Heart /* By / G. P. R. James / In Three Volumes / London / Saunders and Otley / Conduit Street / 1842.

Dedicated to Algernon, Lord Prudhoe, from The Shrubbery, Walmer, 25th April, 1842.

43. *A / History of the Life / of / Richard Cœur-de-Lion / King of England /* By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Saunders and Otley, Conduit Street, 1842.

Volumes I and II appeared in 1842, Volume III in 1843, and Volume IV in 1849.

44. *The Commissioner / or / De Lunatico Inquirendo /* With Twenty-eight Illustrations on Steel / by / Phiz / Dublin / William Curry, Jun., and Company / Orr, London / Fraser and Company, Edinburgh / 1843.

This book was anonymous.

45. *Forest Days / A Romance of Old Times /* By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Saunders and Otley, Conduit Street / 1843.

A story of Robin Hood, in the reign of Henry the Third. Dedicated to James Milnes Gaskell, Esq., M.P.

46. *The False Heir /* By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Richard Bentley / New Burlington Street, 1843.

Scene commences in a French Château.

Dedicated from the The Shrubbery, Walmer, on 1st May, 1843, " To those Members of the Government who aided in the suppression of Continental Piracy of books." A long Introduction on this same matter, wherein he states that to prove, if foreign piratical editions were debarred, the English prices of books would not be raised, he published this particular work " at a great reduction of price, notwithstanding the strenuous and repeated remonstrances of his worthy publisher."

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47. *Eva St. Clair / and / Other Collected Tales / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Two Volumes / Printed for Longman . . . / Paternoster Row / 1843.*

The contents comprise

1. *Eva St. Clair.*
2. *The History of an Assassin.*
3. *Annie Deer.*
4. *The Lucky Chance.*
5. *The Rival Houses.*
6. *Bertrand de la Croix.* See *ante*, page 273.
7. *The Fight of the Fiddlers.* See *ante*, page 282.
8. *Circumstantial Evidence.*
9. *Mary of Mantua.* See *ante*, page 280.
10. *The Bridal of Gertrude.*
11. *The Fire.* Originally written for Charles Lever. See *ante*, pages 88-93.
12. *An Adventure in the Mountains.* This story had separate publication in *Friendly Contributions for the Benefit of the Infant Schools in the Parish of Kensington.*

After the separate publication of *The Fight of the Fiddlers* in 1849 (see *ante*, page 283), *Eva St. Clair* and the other ten stories were republished, without *The Fight of the Fiddlers*, as :

Eva St. Clair / and Other Tales / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Thomas Hodgson, 13, Paternoster Row.
This was in 1855, No. 127 of The Parlour Library.

48. *Arabella Stuart / A Romance / From English History / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street / 1844.*

Dedicated to Admiral Sir George F. Seymour, from The Oaks, near Walmer, 1st December, 1843.

49. *Agincourt / A Romance / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street / 1844.*

50. *Rose D'Albret / or / Troublous Times / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street / 1844.*

A story of the sixteenth century.

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51. *Arrah Neil / or / Times of Old* / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1845.

A Tale of England in the seventeenth century. This story had appeared serially in *The Dublin University Magazine*, 1843-1844.

52. A story entitled *The Slow Man*, By G. P. R. James, appeared in *Hood's Magazine*, August, 1844, and also in a paper-covered Miscellany, *Mrs. Peck's Pudding* / by Tom Hood / and other Selections from English Periodicals / published by Carey and Hart, Philadelphia / 1845.

53. *The Smuggler* / A Tale / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1845.

Dedicated to Charles Ewan Law, M.P., Recorder of London, who in earlier years had visited the scenes described in the book.

A tale of Smuggling in Kent during the eighteenth century. James introduced much actual fact, including the case of George Kingsmill, the smuggler who was shot dead at Goudhurst in 1747. John Banim had used the same title in 1831.

54. *Beauchamp* appeared serially in *The New Monthly Magazine* during 1845-1846, and was not issued in book form until over two years later :

Beauchamp / or / The Error / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1848.

A Georgian tale, commencing in the West of England.

55. *The Stepmother / or Evil Doings* / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Printed for Private Circulation only / 1845.

Printed in newspaper type, two columns to the page, by Chapman and Elcoate, Printers, Peterborough Court, and 5, Shoe Lane.

Second Edition.

The / Stepmother / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company / 65, Cornhill / 1846.

An English tale laid in a midland county.

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56. *Heidelberg* / A Romance / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company / 65, Cornhill / 1846.

57. *The Castle of Ehrenstein / Its Lords / Spiritual and Temporal / Its Inhabitants / Earthly and Unearthly* / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company / 65, Cornhill / 1847.

The first six chapters of this story had appeared in 1845 in Volume II of a weekly magazine called *The Novel Times*, published by J. C. Moore, 12, Wellington Street, North Strand.

Also Chapters one to thirteen appeared in *Ainsworth's Magazine* from July to November, 1845, illustrated with very fine steel engravings by Phiz.

58. *A Whim / and / Its Consequences* / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1847.

This book appeared anonymously. An excellent modern story. Reprinted in *The Railway Library* as :

A Whim / and Its Consequences / by / G. P. R. James / London / George Routledge and Sons / Broadway, Ludgate Hill.

59. *The Convict* / A Tale / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1847.

Commences in St. John's College, Cambridge. A German translation of this tale was published for the author in Berlin.

60. *Russell* / A Tale / of / the Reign of Charles II / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company, 65, Cornhill / 1847.

Deals with Lord William Russell, who was executed in 1683.

61. *The Life / of / Henry the Fourth / King of France and Navarre* / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / T. W. Boone / 29, New Bond Street / 1847.

Contains Frontispiece portrait. This work was commenced in 1843, and printed a little later, but publication was postponed to enable the author to compare his work with *Les Lettres Missives*, issued by the French Government.

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62. *Margaret Graham* appeared serially in *The New Monthly Magazine* during 1847, and was republished in book form the following year :

Margaret Graham / A Tale / Founded on Facts / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Two Volumes / London / Parry and Company / Leadenhall Street / 1848.
Scene is laid in Cumberland.

63. *The Last / of the Fairies* / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / With (11) Illustrations / from Designs by John Gilbert / Engraved by Henry Vizetelly / London, Parry and Company / Leadenhall Street / 1848.

Though assigned to the year 1848, this Christmas book no doubt appeared in time for that season of 1847.

Another edition in 1863, with illustrations by John Gilbert.

64. *Sir Theodore Broughton / or / Laurel Water* / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Smith, Elder, and Company / 65, Cornhill / 1848.

Founded on the actual murder of Sir Theodosius Boughton by John Donellan, in Warwickshire, in 1781, when the celebrated John Hunter gave evidence at the trial.

Republished in one volume, 1853, No. XCVII of The Parlour Library / London / Simms and M'Intyre / Paternoster Row ; and Donegall Street, Belfast.

65. *Camaralzaman* / A Fairy Drama / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Charles Ollier / Southampton Street, Strand / 1848.

66. *Gowrie / or / The King's Plot* / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Simpkin, Marshall, and Company / Stationers' Hall Court / 1848.

With a frontispiece of the Old Palace of Falkland.

Dedicated to the Duchess of Northumberland from Willey House, Farnham, June 27th, 1848. Although this work formed Volume XVII of the Collected Edition, it was an entirely new story and published for the first time. James stated in a preliminary note that the book was sold at a price one quarter of that usually charged, in order to prove that recent copyright protection from piracy abroad would not affect the price of books in England or cause an in-

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crease of price—as he had assured Gladstone, President of the Board of Trade, who had “with consummate ability and great scope of view maintained the general interests of the public.” James had taken the principal part “in many long and important discussions” with Gladstone on the question of the foreign piracy of English books. At the same time James expressed the view “that the increase of sale will be in no degree commensurate with the reduction of price; and therefore I shall never make the experiment again.”

Gowrie was reviewed in an ultra-critical manner in *The Examiner* of August 12th, 1848, and in reply G. P. R. James issued the following:

An Investigation / of the / Circumstances attending the Murder / of / John Earl of Gowrie / and / Alexander Ruthven / By Order of King James the Sixth of Scotland / With / An Examination / of / The Forged Restalrig Letters brought forward to exculpate the King / London / Simpkin, Marshall, and Company / Stationers' Hall Court / 1849.

Reprinted with this is the report of the inquest upon the Ruthven brothers. There is a full examination of the letters of Robert Logan of Restalrig. The Gowrie affair occurred in 1600, three years before the Scottish King became James the First of England. See *ante*, page 115.

Gowrie was republished in 1851 as No. 59 of The Parlour Library.

67. *The Woodman / A Romance of / The Times of Richard III / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / T. C. Newby, 72, Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square / 1849.*

This is the second edition. I have never seen a copy of the first edition; it is not in the libraries of the British Museum and the Bodleian, so presumably this issue was at once withdrawn for some unexplained reason.

Reprinted in The Railway Library, Routledge, 1863.

68. *The Forgery / or / Best Intentions / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby, Publisher / 72, Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square / 1849.*

A modern tale of London.

LIST OF WORKS

69. *John / Jones's Tales / for Little / John Joneses / By /*
G. P. R. James, Esq. / London, Cradoçk and Company, 48
Paternoster Row / 1849.

In two volumes. History told in the form of stories :
Roman to the Norman period.

70. *Rizzio / or / Scenes in Europe / during / the Sixteenth
Century /* by the late / Mr. Ireland / Edited by / G. P. R.
James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / T. C. Newby,
Publisher / 72, Mortimer Street, Cavendish Square / 1849.

G. P. R. James's Preface and his account of William
Henry Ireland (1777-1835), the forger of Shakspeare
manuscripts, are of much interest.

This work by Ireland purported to be the Autobiography
of David Rizzio, and ends just as he is summoned to the
Queen's Cabinet. There is added a letter from Mary
Queen of Scots to her uncle, the Duc de Guise, asking him
to take care of her murdered secretary's manuscripts.
In a final note, G. P. R. James states he inclines to the
belief that W. H. Ireland may have had access to some
fragments of original documents written by Rizzio.

71. *Dark Scenes of History / By /* G. P. R. James, Esq. / In
Three Volumes / London / T. C. Newby, Publisher / 30,
Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1849.

Comprises historical events told in the form of romantic
tales.

Volume I. Amboise.

Arthur.

Perkin Warbeck.

Volume II. The Last Days of the Templars.

The Albigenses.

The Conspiracy of Cueva.

Volume III. Wallenstein.

Herod the Great.

72. *Means of Extensive Relief / from the Pressure of
Taxation /* by Richard Heathfield / With some / Prefatory
Notes upon the early History of Taxation / by G. P. R.
James, Esq. / London / Published by James Ridgway,
Piccadilly, and / Pelham Richardson / 33, Cornhill,
1849.

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73. *Norfolk and Hereford* / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / appeared in *Seven Tales* / By / *Seven Authors* / Edited by / The Author of / *Frank Fairlegh* / "Here are we seven ; if each man take his turn, / We make a sevenfold story." / Tennyson / London / George Hoby / Rice's Library / 123, Mount Street, Berkeley Square / 1849.

Second Edition. *Seven Tales* / By / *Seven Authors* / Edited by Frank E. Smedley / "Here are we seven ; if each man take his turn, / We make a sevenfold story." / Tennyson / Second Edition / London / Arthur Hall, Virtue, and Company / 25, Paternoster Row / 1860.

Preface states this work was written originally for sale by subscription in order to aid a literary lady, a personal friend of G. P. R. James, "and the kindness with which that gentleman entered into his (the editor's) views, and afforded the scheme the benefit of his advice and assistance, mainly contributed to its success." The other six stories were by the editor, Frank E. Smedley ; Miss Pardoe ; Martin Farquhar Tupper ; Mrs. S. C. Hall ; Miss Menella Bute Smedley ; and Mrs. Burbury.

74. *The Old Oak Chest* / A Tale of Domestic Life / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby / Publisher / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1850.
Dedicated to Robert Bell.
An English tale of 1789.

75. *Henry Smeaton* / A Jacobite Story / of / The Reign of George the First / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby, Publisher / Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1851.

This work appeared in the list of new books in *The Athenæum* of 30th November, 1850.

The story commences in London in 1715.

76. *The Fate* / A Tale of Stirring Times / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby, Publisher / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1851.

Scenes are laid in Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and Dorset, in the time of James the Second.

LIST OF WORKS

77. In *Graham's American Monthly Magazine*, 1851, appeared

1. *Christian Lacy*, A Tale of the Salem Witchcraft.
2. *Justinian and Theodora*.
3. *A Sonnet to Jenny Lind*.

Numbers 1 and 2 were reprinted two years later in *The Vicissitudes of a Life*, 1853.

78. In *The Home Circle* (London: Pierce Egan, 60½, St. Martin's Lane) appeared during 1850-1851,

A Story Without a Name / An Historical Novel / Written expressly for this Family Magazine / By / G. P. R. James, Esq.

It was also issued at this time, 1850-1851, in *The International Monthly Magazine of America*. The story appeared in book form as

Revenge / A Novel / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / T. Cautley Newby, Publisher / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1852.

G. P. R. James was then in America, and the title of *Revenge* was probably selected without consulting him, as he had already written a short story entitled *Revenge*, in *The Book of the Passions*, 1839. An anonymous female author, passing as "Ananke," had used the title *A Story Without a Name* in 1844, which made some change in that of James's book advisable, though in the New York edition of March, 1852, it appeared as *A Story Without a Name*. (See *ante*, pages 139 and 156.) But in a later American edition this story of many names and the late seventeenth century was entitled

The Man in Black / A Novel / By G. P. R. James / Philadelphia / T. B. Peterson and Brothers, 306, Chestnut Street.

79. *Adrian / or the / Clouds of the Mind* / A Romance, By G. P. R. James, Esq. / and / Maunsell B. Field, Esq. / In Two Volumes / London / T. and W. Boone, New Bond Street, 1852.

Preface, from Stockbridge, Massachusetts, dated 1st September, 1851, states that the collaborators (inspired by the mode of Beaumont and Fletcher) each wrote a part of every page. (See *ante*, page 152.)

The scene is laid in the United States.

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80. *Pequinillo* / A Tale / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby, Publisher / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1852.

A tale of the early part of the nineteenth century

81. In *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, June to November, 1852, in the section entitled *The Editor's Easy Chair*, appeared *The Bride of Landeck* (see *ante*, page 226). It was reissued in a small volume long after the author's death :

The Bride of Landeck / By / G. P. R. James / New York / Harper and Brothers, Publishers / Franklin Square (1878).

82. *An / Oration / on the / Character and Services / of the late / Duke of Wellington* / Delivered Before The British Residents of Boston and Vicinity, and their American Friends / at / The Melodeon, November 10th, 1852 / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / Boston / Ticknor, Reed, and Fields / 135, Washington Street, 1853.

83. *Agnes Sorrel* / An Historical Romance / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1853. Dedicated to Maunsell B. Field.

A tale of Paris in the fifteenth century.

84. *The Vicissitudes of a Life* / A Novel / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1853.

G. P. R. James states that the autobiography on which the story is based was given to him, when he was a young man, by a stranger whom he met in a French inn.

The scenes range over the Continent and London. The third volume also contains three short stories :

1. *Those Rocks*.

2. *Justinian and Theodora*. See *ante*, page 291.

3. *Christian Lacy*. See *ante*, page 291.

This book was published in America under the title of *A Life of Vicissitudes*.

85. In *Harper's Magazine*, 1853-1855, appeared *Extracts from the Portfolio of an Excitement Seeker* :

LIST OF WORKS

1853.

- March. A. *Introduction.*
 B. *The Drowned Boy and his Mother.*
 C. *A True Ghost Story.* See ante, page 21-22.
 D. *The Feelings of the Dead.*
- April. A. *The Death Trance.*
 B. *Galvanic Resurrection.*
 C. *The Night Wanderer.*
- May. A. *A Search on the Battle Field.*
 B. *Warming a Viper.*
- July. A. *The Slow Match.*
 B. *Physiological Experiments.*
- December. *Four Sights of a Young Man.*

1854.

- January. *The Italian Sisters.*
 February. *The Garrote.*
 March. *The Raven.*
 May. *The Governor's Lady.*
 November. *A Night in an Old Castle.*

1855.

- March. *Love and Charcoal.*
 August. *The Mysterious Occurrence in Lambeth.*

86. *Ticonderoga* / or / *The Black Eagle* / A Tale of Times Not Long Past / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1854.

A note states that the early chapters were written in May, 1851.

The scene is laid in America, and "The Black Eagle" is an Indian Chief. Later the titles were reversed, and the book appeared as *The Black Eagle* / or / *Ticonderoga* / in The Railway Library, 1859, one volume.

87. *Prince Life* / A Story for My Boy / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Thomas Cautley Newby / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1856.

A fairy story with four illustrations by S. Allen.

88. *The Old Dominion* / or the *Southampton Massacre* / A Novel / By / G. P. R. James, Esq. / Second Edition / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby,

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Publisher / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1856.
Presumably the first edition appeared in America.

Another edition published by Routledge and Co. / Farringdon Street / 1858. With an illustration.

89. *Leonora D'Orco* / A Historical Romance / In Three Volumes / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / London / Thomas Cautley Newby, Publisher / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1857.

Commences near Lago Maggiore in 1494.

A new edition, Routledge, 1858.

90. *Lord Montagu's Page* / A Historical Romance / By G. P. R. James, Esq. / In Three Volumes / London / Thomas Cautley Newby, Publisher / 30, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square / 1858.

Dedicated to Gustavus A. Myers, Esq., in May, 1858, from Richmond, Virginia.

G. P. R. James's son, Charles James, stated that William Myers (son of Gustavus A. Myers, a wealthy Jew of Richmond, Virginia) furnished illustrations for *Lord Montagu's Page*. Presumably these were in an American edition of the book, for the English edition of 1858 is unillustrated.

A story of the time of Louis XIII ; Richelieu appears.
The sequel was :

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NOTE.

To page 260.

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